

1608 / 5896

THE
Divine Oracles.

OR

The sufficiency of the *holy scriptures*,
as a rule of Religion, *asserted*,

According to the

Sixth Article of the Church of *England*.

And

*The concurrent Testimony of Scripture and the
Fathers, in behalf of Tradition, discussed.*

In Answer to a Book intituled

*A full, true and comprehensive View of Christian-
ity, &c. during the Four First Centuries——laid
down in Two Catechisms.*

By JOHN BREKELL,

Author of the *Christian Warfare*, &c.

Εξηγῆται κακοὶ τῶν καλῶς εἰρημένον γινόμενοι. *Irenaus.*

L O N D O N:

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Divine Circle

The history of the Divine Circle
as a tale of Religion and Love

Sixth Article of the Circle of Religion

The Divine Circle of Religion and Love
is a tale of Religion and Love

In Answer to the Question

What is the Divine Circle of Religion and Love
and how is it to be maintained?

JOHN R. KELLY

Author of the Divine Circle of Religion and Love

Published by the Divine Circle of Religion and Love

Printed and Published by the Divine Circle of Religion and Love
at the Divine Circle of Religion and Love
in the Divine Circle of Religion and Love



INTRODUCTION.

IN TENDING, if it please God, to consider, what the anonymous catechist hath advanced in order to support the authority of *tradition* (the sole basis of his favourite scheme, which being once destroyed the pompous superstructure must of course fall to the ground) I think proper, at my entrance upon this argument, to state the notion of *tradition*, that so we may guard against all equivocation. By *tradition* then, as contradistinguished from *Scripture*, I understand, “A
“ certain system or set of religious instructions,
“ which the Apostles are *supposed* to have delivered only by word of mouth, without committing them to writing; instructions additional, and supplementary, to the *Scripture*;
“ but of equal force with it; as a divine rule of religion to the Christian Church in all ages.” Hence, you must know, ariseth the distinction between the written, and the unwritten word of God. For, since the Apostles both spake and wrote by divine authority, therefore, according to the traditionary gentlemen, *Scripture* is the written, and *tradition* the unwritten word of

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God.

God. (a) \ Thus far we understand one another. It is also further agreed between us, that Jesus Christ delivered his doctrine without writing it himself, and that all the Apostles did not commit their doctrine to writing, but that some of the Apostles did make use of writing, for the conveyance of the Christian doctrine to succeeding ages, and that their writings are inspired. (b) Now, the proper question, and the only point of controversie here, is *this*, viz. "Whether these Inspired writings of the Apostles, together with all the other canonical books of holy Scripture, contain an imperfect rule of revealed religion, whose deficiencies are to be supplied by tradition?" In which question, the Catechist affirmeth, and I deny; maintaining, on the contrary, that the Holy Scripture exhibiteth a perfect and compleat rule of Revealed Religion, which hath no defects to be supplied, and wanteth not to be eked out by tradition. For my own part, I shall not a little wonder, if, to any man of common sense, and of a fair unbiassed mind, it doth not appear exceeding plain and evident *a priori*, from the wisdom and goodness of God, in granting a written rule

(a) "The word of God therefore is of two sorts, written and unwritten. The unwritten word is Tradition." *Small Catechism*. part. i. lesson 26. "But as the Apostles taught much more than they have written, the rest of their doctrine and practice was preserved by tradition alone. — And obedience obliges us to receive all Apostolical traditions, because they come from the same fountain as the Scripture does." *Large Catechism* part i. lesson 47.

(b) "Jesus Christ wrote nothing. — There are but six of the Apostles, whose writings we have. — All these writings of the Apostles and Evangelists are not their own thoughts, they were dictated to them by the Holy Ghost." *L. Catech. ibid.*

rule of religion, to his churches, that He would not fail to give her such a perfect rule, as would sufficiently answer the proper end of a rule. Besides, what imaginable reason can be assigned, that divine wisdom should determine, to favour us with a written rule of religion at all, but with a provident design to guard against the great uncertainties, and obvious inconveniencies of oral tradition. (c) But, if tradition was not fit to be trusted with the whole of the Christian Doctrine, why with any part of it? On the other hand, if tradition was fit to be trusted with part of the Christian Doctrine, why not with the whole of it? — How came the spirit of God, when employed in framing a religion, designed for the use and benefit of all ages to the end of the world, so far to forget himself (pardon the expression, the blasphemy is not mine) as to provide imperfectly against those very evils, which the Holy Scriptures were intended to prevent, or redress; although, with the same ease, and with greater advantage to posterity and truth, He could have made effectual provision against these things, by a written rule of religion every way perfect and compleat? These are home questions, which, I think, very well deserved a place in our Author's Catechisms; but, alas! they require a more solid and satisfactory answer, than he is capable of shaping, with all his ingenuity, upon his own absurd principles. Absurd principles I say; because nothing can be more so, than the hypothesis, which he hath embraced. By granting that God hath given us a written Inspired rule of religion, or, which is the same thing in effect, that

(c) See Bp. Burnet's Exposition on the sixth Article of the Church of England.

that the Scriptures are Inspired; the Catechist hath made a concession, which, like a mill-stone hung about its neck, must infallibly sink his chimerical system in the impartial judgment, and rational esteem, of all wise and understanding men. What! a rule of religion divinely Inspired! and yet an imperfect rule, incapable of answering its proper end and design, without being liable to those very inconveniences, which it was intended to obviate! What a strange turn of mind must that man have acquired, who can seriously entertain, and solemnly avow, so wild a notion! It is more amazing still, that he should father the spurious and *romantick* opinion upon the primitive Church. But, the most shocking thing of all (the very mention whereof is enough to make any Christian ear tingle) is the vain pretence that the scripture itself proclaimeth its own imperfection, by referring us for better information, to the uncertain rumours, to the flying, and too often lying, reports of tradition, oral unwritten tradition. But, let us now see what arguments in favour of his weak, not to say wicked, hypothesis, this famous *Compiler* hath collected; from what sink I need not say, *his speech betrayeth him*.

SECTION I.

The Authority of TRADITION not proved from Scripture.

I shall now enter upon the task, which I have undertaken, and so begin with a particular examination of those testimonies, which the Catechist

techist hath alleged from *scripture in behalf of tradition*. (d)

“ St. Paul, as the Catechist observeth, (d) “ *writes thus to St. Timothy, (e)* Hold fast the “ form of sound words, which thou hast heard “ of me.” — But not a word here of *tradition*, though mention is made of hearing, *i. e.* from oral instruction; which I grant, the Apostles used in the first publication of the Christian doctrine; but what hath *this* to do with *tradition*, in our present notion and construction of the word? unless the Catechist could make it appear that the said *form of sound words* contained more of the Christian Doctrine, than is recorded in the Scripture. Surely, it doth not follow, by any rules of Logic, that because the Christian Doctrine was preached before it was written, therefore, after it was committed to writing, unwritten tradition was to be a standing rule to the Christian Church, in all future ages. The contrary supposition is far more natural, just and reasonable, *viz.* that after the Christian Doctrine was by divine Inspiration committed to writing, the sacred writings were from thence forward to be the standing rule of religion, otherwise, why were they written at all?

“ *And again:* The things that thou hast heard “ from me, the same commit thou to faithful “ men, who shall be able to teach others also.”

(f) — Here, indeed we have the word *commit*, implying a trust; but, things may be committed to any one's trust, in writing, as well

(d) See *L. Catech.* Part ii. less. 33.

(e) 2 Tim. i. 13.

(f) 2 Tim. ii. 2.

well as without it. "To them were committed the oracles of God," saith *St. Paul*, (g) speaking of the written laws, that were given to the *Jews*. "But *Timothy* wrote nothing." Be it so; yet it remaineth to be proved, that the things, which he had heard from *St. Paul*, and was to commit to faithful men, contained more of the Christian Doctrine, than is to be found upon record, in the sacred writings; and not only so, but likewise that these unwritten things were to be a standing rule to Christians forever. If *Timothy* and others, favoured with the same spiritual gifts, in those Days, wrote nothing, there is an obvious reason for it; namely, because there was a competent number of sacred Penmen without them, to give a true, and full account of the Christian Doctrine; otherwise, the same divine wisdom, which employed some, would unquestionably have set more hands on work, to finish the great Plan.

"Again: *The same Apostle writes thus to the Thessalonians*: (h) Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions, which ye have been taught, whether by word or our Epistle." — In this passage I own, express mention is made of *traditions*; but in a sense very different from the Catechist's notion of tradition. For, by traditions he understandeth extrascriptural or unwritten instructions; but *St. Paul* speaketh of traditions, that were taught by *Epistle* as well as by *word* of mouth. So that, according to him, "tradition signifieth any delivery of doctrine, in whatever way it is made, " whe-

(g) Rom. iii. 2. Compare Acts vii. 38, 53.

(h) 2 Theff. ii. 15.

“ whether by word or writing.” (i) Which construction of *this* word, *tradition*, I desire the Reader to keep in mind ; because it will be of great use and service for the right understanding of many passages in the antient Christian Writers, which we shall have occasion hereafter to consider. At present, must not the Catechist be a very lucky man, if he can support the authority of tradition, by a text of scripture, which contradicteth his very notion of tradition ? “ But the Apostle saith *whether by word, &c.*” True : St. *Paul* had preached the Christian Doctrine to the *Thessalonians* ; and afterwards he had wrote to them, upon the same important subject ; and so he exhorted them, stedfastly to adhere to the said doctrine, in whatever way or manner they had received it, the doctrine being the *very same* in itself. In order then to make it appear, that *this* text is any thing to his purpose, it will be incumbent upon the Catechist to prove, on the contrary, that the traditions, or instructions, which St. *Paul* had delivered to the *Thessalonians*, by his preaching, were *different* from what either himself or any other inspired person hath committed to writing. (k) And, I presume, he will be wiser than to make the vain attempt.

“ *And again*, (l) Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother,

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“ ther,

(i) *Traditio* significat quamlibet doctrinae communicationem, quocunque modo fiat, tam scripto, quam ore. *P. Limborch Theolog. Christ.* lib. i. c. 5. §. 25.

(k) See D. *Whitby* in loc. *M. Pool's* Dialogue between a Popish Priest and an English Protestant, p. 54, &c.

(l) 2 *Thef.* iii. 6.

“ ther, that walketh disorderly, and not after
 “ the tradition, which he received from us.”

— Here the word, *tradition*, occurreth again; but, as I have shewn before, it is a general term, to expresse instruction, in whatever way it is delivered. And further to support this notion, let me refer the Reader to the following words of St. Paul. (m) For, I *delivered* unto you first of all, that which also I *received*, how that Christ died for our sins *according to the Scriptures*. Thus, the Apostle speaketh of a *Scripture* delivery, or tradition of Scripture Doctrine. I must therefore call upon the Catechist to prove, that the tradition, which the Apostle intended in the passage under consideration, was of a different nature from any thing, that either St. Paul himself, or any other of the sacred Pen-men have left upon record. But, “ the tradition here
 “ mentioned, is, says *Cbrysostom*, *Theodore*, *Oecumenius*, and *Theophylact*, the tradition, which
 “ he delivered by — *his works*, in which he
 “ was an example to them of Industry.” (n) And, I doubt not, but the Catechist will allow, that diligence in men’s particular callings is a duty enjoined in the Holy Scriptures.

“ *And to the Corinthians, he writes*, (o) Now,
 “ I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me
 “ in all things, and keep the traditions, as I
 “ delivered them unto you.” — This passage, I confess, is a plain proof, that St. Paul had delivered some traditions, that is to say, some Christian Doctrines or Instructions, to the *Corinthians*; but no proof at all, of what it is alleged

(m) 1 Cor. xv. 3.

(n) Dr. *Whitby* in loc.

(o) 1 Cor. xi. 2.

leged for, viz. that St. *Paul* had delivered to them any extra-scriptural traditions, or such traditions and doctrines, as neither then were, nor hereafter should be committed to sacred writing. (p) On the contrary, I have just now produced one scriptural tradition, which this Apostle had delivered to the *Corinthians*, viz. concerning the *death* of Christ. And I shall here mention another, in the same context, (q) viz. "Christ's rising again the third day, according to the Scriptures." A third instance occurreth in the same chapter, from whence the Catechist hath fetched his proof, such as it is. (r) "For, I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, &c." St. *Paul* might have added here also, according to the Scriptures; (of the New Testament) because what he subjoineth concerning the institution of the Lord's Supper, is perfectly agreeable to the written account of it in the Gospel. — Now by these plain examples we may clearly perceive what sort of traditions St. *Paul* had delivered to the *Corinthians*, namely, scriptural doctrines and institutions.

There is another passage in the same chapter, with which the Catechist hath made a flourish in a former Lesson, (s) as a kind of forlorn hope, to prepare the way for establishing the authority of tradition, and of ecclesiastical customs as founded upon it. (t) "But, if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom,

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(p) See Dr. *Whitby* in loc.

(q) 1 Cor. xv. 4.

(r) 1 Cor. xi. 23.

(s) L. Catech. P. ii. leff. 31.

(t) 1 Cor. xi. 16.

“ custom, neither the churches of God.” Well, from this *Scripture* we learn that the churches of God had no such custom as that, to which the Apostle there refereth. What farther? Why the Catechist hath a pretty remark upon the text. “ In which text, saith he, St. *Paul* re-
 “ prehends some in the Church of *Corinth*, for
 “ going about to introduce a new rite or cus-
 “ tom. — From whence it is very plain, that
 “ the use and custom of the Churches of God
 “ or the Catholick Church *is* a law, from
 “ which no particular Church ought to swerve
 “ or vary.” — But this inference is wrong. Be-
 cause the utmost that can follow from the pre-
 misses is only *this*, viz. that the use and custom
 of the Churches of God *was* a law, &c. in the
 Apostle’s days. And good reason why; be-
 cause no customs could generally obtain in the
 Churches of God at that time, but what both
 were, and might be certainly known to be,
 Apostolical customs. It is therefore granted,
 that, “ Whatever rite and custom did *always*
 “ and *every where* obtain could not but be of
 “ Apostolical institution; and whatever rite and
 “ custom is of Apostolical institution, cannot
 “ but be necessary, &c.” I say all this is free-
 ly granted; and when the Catechist can prove
 that his traditionary rites and customs are of
 this nature, I promise him my ready consent.
 But, till then he must excuse me, if I cannot
 but look upon him, and such as him, as no
 better than Innovaters in religion, and there-
 fore worthy of Apostolical *reprehension*, how high
 soever they can trace any of their peculiarities
 below the earlier date of the Apostle’s time,
 the true and only Epocha of Christian antiquity.

“ For

“ For custom, (however antient) without truth
 “ to support it, is but the antiquity, or dotage,
 “ of error. Wherefore, abandoning all error
 “ let us follow the truth.” As *S. Cyprian* speak-
 eth, (v) where he is contending for *Scripture* au-
 thority, in opposition to *traditionary* customs.

Thus, we have considered all the testimonies
 alleged by our Catechist from the *Scripture in*
behalf of tradition. And he must be a cunning
 man, endowed with uncommon sagacity and pe-
 netration, who can discern any thing at all, in
 these testimonies, to support the authority of
 tradition, as a standing rule of religion to the
 Christian Church, additional and supplementary
 to the *Scripture*, and co-ordinate or of equal
 force with it in all ages; unless the bare men-
 tion of the word *tradition*, here and there, but
 with no such view, will do the business. It is,
 I confess, very surprizing to me, with what ef-
 frontry, any man could insist upon these texts
 of *Scripture*, as favouring tradition, after they
 have been so often and so fully shewn by the
 Protestant writers to be nothing to the purpose.
 But now, since the Catechist hath succeeded so
 poorly in his attempt, to support the authority
 of unscriptural tradition from the *Scripture* it-
 self; I shall in the next place refer him to some
 plain texts, that speak of *tradition*, much more
 conformably to his notion of the thing, than any
 before alleged. In the Gospel according to
St Mark, we have the following account: (w)
 “ Then the Pharisees and Scribes asked him,
 “ Why walk not thy Disciples according to
 “ the

(v) Nam consuetudo sine veritate vetustas erroris est: prop-
 ter quod, relicto errore, sequamur veritatem. *S. Cypr. Ep. 74.*

(w) *Mark vii. 5.*—13.

“ the *tradition* of the Elders, &c.” Observe! The Pharisees and Scribes (good men, and great admirers of antient unwritten customs) “ held the tradition of the Elders;” (x) but the profane Disciples of Christ (like true Protestants) had learned from him to slight those *holy inventions*. By the way, therefore, when Jesus Christ said to his Disciples, upon another occasion, (y) “ The Scribes and Pharisees sit “ in *Moses’s* seat; all therefore, whatsoever “ they bid you observe, that observe and do : “ but do not ye after their works, &c.” It could not be his intention to enjoin upon them a scrupulous observance of the extra-scriptural customs and traditions of the *Jewish Church*; but only, a strict regard to the Scripture precepts, which were delivered by the authority of *Moses*, (z) and which the Scribes and Pharisees themselves were too prone to *neglect*, although they were very observant of the traditions of the fathers. — But, to proceed with St. Mark’s account. “ He answered, and said “ unto them, well hath *Isaias* prophesied of “ you, hypocrites, as it is written, This people “ honoureth me with their lips, but their heart “ is far from me. Howbeit, in vain do they “ worship me, teaching for doctrines the com- “ mandments of men. For, laying aside the “ commandment of God (*i. e.* his written “ word)

(x) Mark vii. 3.

(y) Matt. xxiii. 2, 3.

(z) Alibi tamen monet discipulos, ut sibi caveant a fermento doctrinæ falsæ Phariseorum et Sadducæorum. *Matt.* xvi. 6, 12. Et sic ostendit præceptum illud non esse absolute accipiendum, sed cum hac limitatione, Quatenus sedent supra cathedram Moysi, id est legem per Moysen datam fideliter docent et exponunt. *Steph. Curcell. Op. Theolog.* pag. 670.

“ word) ye hold the traditions of men, &c.—
 “ Making the *word of God* of none effect, thro’
 “ your tradition, which ye have delivered.”—
 Thus hath our blessed Saviour, (a teacher, who
 came from God, to rectify and reform the
 superstitions, errors, and follies of men) largely
 set forth the fine tendency of following tradi-
 tion: which, though it may begin with such in-
 different things, as the washing the hands be-
 fore meat, &c. not expressly forbidden by the
 word of God, yet endeth, at last, in things
 contrary to the word of God, and inconsistent
 with it. — Again: St Paul saith of himself. (a)
 “ Beyond measure I persecuted the Church of
 “ God, and wasted it; and profited in the
 “ *Jews* religion above many, my equals, in
 “ mine own nation, being more exceedingly
 “ zealous of the *traditions of my fathers*.” Be-
 hold here the blessed effect of zeal for traditions!
 With what a peculiar spirit doth it inspire its
 devotees!—Again: “ Beware, saith the same
 “ Apostle, (b) lest any man spoil you, through
 “ Philosophy, and vain deceit, after the *tradi-*
 “ *tion of men*, after the rudiments of the world,
 “ and not after Christ.” Now, what were the
rudiments of the *world*, which these dealers in
 tradition maintained? but, probably, some *Ju-*
daizing opinions and practices. (c) This is not
 unlike what certain persons in our days are for
 advancing, when they would make the king-
 dom of Christ, to be so far a kingdom of this
 world, as that they suppose the Christian Church
 to have been *originally* modelled according to
 the

(a) Gal. i. 13, 14.

(b) Col. ii. 8.

(c) See Dr. *Whitby* in loci

the plan of the *Roman* empire. (d) Hence it is, that you hear them talk so big, about the *common law*, and the *statute law* of the Church; (e) as if Jesus Christ was an incompetent law-giver, without ecclesiastical parliaments to mend his institutions, and to supply their defects from time to time; although St. *Paul* addeth in the same place, as a reason to enforce the preceeding caution. (f) “For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are *complete* in him, which is the head of all principality and power.” Consequently, there is no necessity or occasion, for any other spiritual lawgivers in his Church. But this by the way.—Once more St. *Peter* hath the following words, (g) “For as much as ye know, that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, *received by tradition from your fathers*; but with the precious blood of Christ, &c.” And what! did Jesus Christ shed his most precious blood, to redeem men from the *vanity* and folly, from the *bondage* and slavery of tradition; whereby true religion had been so grossly corrupted, in theory and practice? How then, to be serious, could it possibly consist with his divine wisdom, to trust his most excellent religion, in whole, or in part, to the slippery hands of tradition, after it had made such miserable work both among *Jews* and *Heathens*?

Let any one now pause awhile, and consider, what a lasting mark of infamy and reproach is

(d) See L. Cat. P. ii. leff. 152.

(e) L. Cat. P. ii. leff. 31.

(f) Col. ii. 9, 10.

(g) 1 Pet. i. 18, 19.

is fixed upon *tradition*, as an authoritative rule, or guide in religion, by the word of the living God ; and from hence forth he will be effectually fortified against the enchanting charm of this word *tradition*. A word of that mighty force and energy, in the *mystic* Theology, as to have a marvelous effect upon some persons ; it blindeth their eyes, and misleadeth their judgments, like an ignis fatuus. So that, wherever the word occurreth, these men are presently in an extacy ; and, transported beyond themselves, see strange and wonderful visions, which no where exist, but in their own superstitious and vain imaginations ; as will manifestly appear, with a further degree of evidence and conviction, by considering those *testimonies*, which the Catechist hath alleged from the *Fathers*, in *behalf of Tradition*.

SECTION II.

The Authority of Tradition not proved from the Fathers.

SINCE the Catechist hath appealed to the Fathers ; in the name of truth, to the Fathers let us go ; (taking them in the order, as he hath cited them) without laying any undue weight or stress upon their authority, farther than hearing them declare *their* sentiment, upon the point in question, and admitting them in evidence, for their own opinion ; which the judicious reader will understand, is all that properly

perly concerneth us in this argument : though I can safely joyn issue with him here, if the Catechist is willing to be determined by the authority of the Fathers as *decisive*, concerning the Christian rule of Religion.

The Epistle of Barnabas. (h)

A. D. “ St. Barnabas saith,” (as the Cate-
71 chist hath observed) (i) “ Thou shalt keep
“ the things, which thou hast received,
“ neither adding thereto, nor taking there
“ from.” Now, in order that we may discover,
what relation these words have to the matter in
hand, it will be proper for us to consider, how
they are introduced, and connected, in the
discourse : which will appear from the following
extract. (k) “ Thou shalt not hesitate, or delay
“ to give, nor murmur when thou dost give.
“ Give to every one that asketh thee : for thou
“ shalt know, who is the good repayer of the
“ reward. *Keep what things thou hast received,*
“ *neither adding nor taking away.* Thou shalt al-
ways

(h) Mr. Jones (on the Canon of the N. Test. Part iii. Chap 39.) disputes the genuineness of the Epistle of *Barnabas*; but Dr. Lardner, and other learned men, have thought it genuine.

(i) Long Catech. P. ii. less. 33. N. B. For the information of common Readers, I have set down over-against the name of each Father, the year of our Lord when he flourished.

(k) Οὐ διστάσεις δῶναι, οὐδὲ δίδουε γογγύσεις. Παντὶ αἰτοῦντί σε δίδου. Γνώσῃ δὲ, τίς ὁ τοῦ μισθοῦ καλὸς ανταποδότης. Φυλάξεις αὖ παρέλαβες, μὴτε προσιδείς, μὴτε ἀφαιρῶν. Εἰς τέλος μισήσεις τὸν πονηρὸν. Κρινεῖς δικαίως.
Sec. S. Barnab. Ep. cap. 19. pag. 52. Coteler Patr. Apost. Vol. 1. Edit. Ult. Amsterd.

“ ways detest a villain. Thou shalt judge righteously.” &c. Thus the words under consideration are surrounded with *social* duties; it is therefore natural to understand them in the same view, as requiring the strictest honour and fidelity in keeping a pledge, a trust, or depositum, committed by one friend to another. In the name of common sense, then, what hath this to do with *tradition*, in the present dispute? But suppose it had; still the passage would be nothing to his purpose, unless the Catechist could prove, that the things here mentioned to be received, and ordered to be religiously kept, were such things as are not contained in the Scripture. The manner of expression concerning them, I can assure him, and hope to convince him, doth by no means imply any such thing. Because, the very same way of speaking is used by St. *John*, and applied to things written, *i. e.* in the Holy Scriptures. And, as the passage is in the very close of the Canon of Scripture, it seemeth to contain a proper caution against all unscriptural traditions. The words are as follows, (1) “ If any man *shall* add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this Book. And, if any man shall *take away* from the words of the book, &c.”—I will conclude my remarks upon this head with a passage in *the Apostolical Constitutions*, (as they are called) which some writers consider as parallel to the words of *Barnabas*, before us; and then leave the Reader to judge, whether, in this view, they do not rather condemn than countenance extra-scriptural

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(1) Rev. xxii. 18, 19.

traditions, (m) “Thou shalt not forsake the
“commandments of the Lord. But, thou
“shalt keep the things, which thou has receiv-
“ed from him, neither adding unto them, nor
“taking away from them. For, thou shalt
“not add to his words, lest he reprove thee,
“and thou be found a liar.”

St. Ignatius.

A. D. 100 “*Eusebius in his history*, (saith the Ca-
techist) gives an account, that St.
“*Ignatius*, as he went through *Asia* to
“his martyrdom, exhorted the Churches, to
“keep firmly to the Tradition of the Apostles,
“which being confirmed by his own testimony
“*he thought necessary, for the more certain knowledge*
“*of posterity, to be put in writing.*”—

A notable proof this, of the authority of
unwritten tradition! which, (especially if the Ca-
techist had given the words of *Eusebius* their
proper emphasis) rather destroyeth the authority
of all such traditions. The truth of the mat-
ter is this: *Eusebius* relateth, that *Ignatius*, as
he went through *Asia* to *Rome*, visited the
Churches in the Cities through which he passed,
and “exhorted them (n) to be particularly up-
“on their guard against the heresies, which then
“first

(m) Οὐ μὴ ἐγκαταλίπῃς ἐντολὰς κυρίου. φυλάξεις δὲ αὐτὰς παραλαβὴς παρ' αὐτοῦ. [μὴτε προσιδεῖς ἐπ' αὐτοῖς,] μὴτε ἀφαιρῶν ἀπ' αὐτῶν. Οὐ προθήσεις γὰρ τοῖς λόγοις αὐτοῦ, δεσ. *Constit. Apost. lib. 7. cap. 14.*

(n) Ἐν πρώτῃς μάλιστα προφυλάττειν τὰς αἱρέσεις ἅρτι τότε πρώτου ἀναφεύκτας καὶ ἐπιπολαζόντας παρήναι. Προὔτρε-
πε τε ὑπὲρ ἐχέειν τῆς τῶν Ἀποστόλων παραδόσεως, ἣν ὑπὲρ
ἐσφαλῆας, καὶ ἐγγράφως ἤδη μαρτυρούμενος, διατυπώσας
ἀνιγκῶν ἡγήτο. *Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. 3. cap. 36. p. 86.*
Edit. Vales.

“ first began to spread. He urged them firmly to hold the tradition of the Apostles, which having testified in *writing*, he thought it necessary to be copied for the greater safety or security.”—So little then did *Ignatius* trust to unwritten traditions! (o) Besides, in order to make it appear, that this passage is any thing to his purpose, the Catechist ought to shew, that the *tradition of the Apostles*, here mentioned, contained more of the Christian doctrine, than is to be found in the Scripture; and, consequently, that *Ignatius* was wiser than the Apostles, and took a better method than they did, to preserve that doctrine, for the more certain knowledge of posterity. But, that, by the *tradition of the Apostles*, nothing more is intended than the true doctrine of the Apostles, as delivered in the Scriptures, will be evident to any one, that considereth, not only the common signification of this phrase in the Christian Fathers, but also the particular nature of those heresies, to which the said tradition was opposed by *Ignatius*. Because they were unscriptural, and antiscritural heresies, at the least in his opinion; and therefore the tradition of the Apostles, which he exhorted the *Asiatick* Churches to hold fast, in opposition to the said heresies, could be no other than the Scripture Doctrine of the Apostles as by him understood. In farther evidence of this incontestable truth, I shall now refer the Reader to another passage, in the writings of *Ignatius*, where he fully declareth that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, were the rule of Faith, which he follow-

(o) See Dr. *Whitby* on 2 Pet. i. 15.

followed. (p) “ Fleeing to the Gospel as the
 “ flesh of Jesus, and to the Apostles, as the
 “ presbytrie of the Church. Let us also love
 “ the Prophets, because they also spoke of the
 “ Gospel, &c. “ In this place,” (q) (saith a
 learned friend, whose words I shall transcribe
 at length) “ *Grabe* and *Mill*, understand, by
 “ *the Gospel*, the book or volume of the Gos-
 “ pels; by *the Apostles*, the book or volume of
 “ their epistles: as by the *Prophets*, the volume
 “ or whole Canon of the Old Testament. And
 “ *Le Clerc*, (r) who assents to the truth of the
 “ observation of these learned men, has farther
 “ commented upon this passage in this man-
 “ ner.” “ Which words, says he, as it seems,
 “ are to be understood of the *Evangelic* and
 “ *Apostolic* writings. So that what *Ignatius* in-
 “ tends is this: that in order to understand
 “ the will of God, he fled to *the Gospels*, which
 “ he believed no less, than if Christ himself
 “ in *the flesh*, that is in the condition he was
 “ in on earth, present and still living among
 “ men, delivered with his own mouth those
 “ discourses, which are contained in the Gos-
 “ pel. As also, he fled to *the writings of the*
 “ *Apostles*, whom he esteemed as the presbyterie
 “ of the whole *Christian Church*, under *Christ* the
 “ uni-

(p) Πρὸς αὐτὸν τῷ Εὐαγγελίῳ ὡς σαρκὶ Ἰησοῦ, καὶ τοῖς
 Ἀποστόλοις ὡς πρεσβυτερίῳ ἐκκλησίας. Καὶ τοὺς Προφῆτας δὲ
 ἀγαπῶμεν, διὰ τὸ καὶ αὐτοὺς εἰς τὸ εὐαγγέλιον καταγγε-
 λῆσαι. *Ignat. Ep. ad Philadelph. Cap. p. 31. Cotter P.*
Ap. Vol. 2.

(q) Dr. Lardner's Credibility of the Gospel History, Part
 2. Vol. 1. p. 178, 179.

(r) Quæ verba videntur de Evangeliiis & Apostolicis Scriptis
 intelligenda, &c. *Hist. Eccles. p. 567. A. D. 116. §. 25.*
 Compare his Note on the place in *Ignatius*.

“ universal Bishop, which [presbytery] taught
 “ all Christian societies what they ought to be-
 “ lieve. Whence it is sufficiently manifest, how
 “ much the sacred books of the New Testa-
 “ ment were esteemed at that time. He adds:
 “ *Let us also love the Prophets.* Which words
 “ intend the Old Testament, as written: for
 “ the Prophets could not be otherwise known
 “ to *Ignatius*. Nor, ought it to be passed by,
 “ without observation, that he in the first place
 “ mentions the writings of the New Testament
 “ by which we are Christians, as his *refuge*: and
 “ in the second place the books of the Old
 “ Testament because the *New* may be con-
 “ firmed out of them.”

St. Polycarp.

“ *St. Polycarp saith* (as the Cate- A. D.
 “ chist proceeds) Wherefore, leav- 108.
 “ ing the vanity of many, and their
 “ false doctrines, let *us* return to the word,
 “ that was delivered to us from the beginning.”

— But with what right, or by what rule of
 Criticism, the Catechist, understandeth this pas-
 sage of extrascriptural tradition I cannot com-
 prehend. *St. John*, whose disciple *Polycarp* is
 said to have been, telleth the persons, to whom
 he addressed his Epistle, (s) “ that he wrote
 “ to them the word, which they had heard
 “ from the beginning.” And, that *Polycarp*
 speaks of the same word with his master, may
 be justly inferred, not only from the similitude
 of their language; but likewise from his refer-
 ing

(f) 1 John ii. 7.

ing to the very words of *St John*, just before, in this manner. (t) “ For every one, that confesseth not Jesus Christ to be come in the flesh is antichrist. [*John ii. 7.*]—And who ever perverteth the *Oracles of the Lord* to his own lusts—he is the first-born of Satan. Wherefore leaving the vanity of many, and their false doctrines, let us return to the word, which was delivered to us from the beginning.” And thus, the word, or doctrine, which was delivered to them, from the beginning, is manifestly no other than the true Scripture doctrine of Christ, as contradicting and distinguished from those false doctrines, which the vanity of many had increased, by perverting the *Oracles of God*, or the *Holy Scriptures*; (v) which we shall find to be the constant complaint of the Christian Fathers, against the heresies of their times.

St. Justin Martyr.

A. D. 140. “ *St. Justin Martyr speaks thus (as cited by the Catechist)* Afterwards the fear of the Lord is sung, and the grace of the Prophets is known, and the faith of the Gospels is established, and the tradition of the Apostles is preserved, and

(t) Πᾶς γὰρ ὃς ἂν μὴ ὁμολογῇ Ἰησοῦν χριστὸν ἐν σαρκὶ ἐληλυθῆναι, Ἀντίχριστός ἐστι—καὶ ὃς ἂν μεθοδεύῃ τὰ λόγια τοῦ κυρίου πρὸς τὰς ἰδίας ἐπιθυμίας—οὗτος πρωτοτόκος ἐστὶ τοῦ Σατανᾶ. Διδέκοντες τὴν ματαιότητα τῶν πολλῶν, καὶ τὰς ψευδοδασκαλίας, ἐπὶ τὸν ἐξάρχῃς ἡμῖν παραδόντα λόγον ἐπιστρέφμεν. *S. Polycarp Ep. ad Philip. Cap. 7. Coteler.*

(v) Τὰ λόγια τοῦ Θεοῦ. *Rom. iii. 2.*

“ and the grace of the Church exults. (w)— But, this arrow, instead of hitting the mark, is in danger to rebound upon the Archer. For, I appeal to any man of common sense, whether in these expressions, the fear of the *law* (so it should be read) the grace of the *prophets*, the faith of the *Gospels*, and the tradition of the *Apostles*, &c. *Justin Martyr* doth not plainly refer to the whole Canon of Scripture? The very same division of the Scripture is made by *Clement of Alexandria*. (x) “ *Clement* observes “ that there is a consent and harmony between “ the *Law*, and the *Prophets*, the *Apostles*, and “ the *Gospel*.” (y) But so it is! when a man’s head turneth round, and groweth giddy with notions of tradition, he can see or make strange sights: misconstrue in *capitals* to throw the mist of his own eyes before others! This ecclesiastical jaundice discoloured every object. — The same *Justin Martyr* else-where giving an account of the Christian worship faith, (z) “ The writings of the *Apostles*, or of the *Prophets* are “ read, as the time admiteth.” And this sheweth how the *tradition* of the *Apostles* was

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(w) *Εἴτα φόβος Νόμου ἄδεται, &c. J. Martyr Ep. ad Diognet. Op. pag. 502. Edit. Colon.*

Though the Catechist has taken no notice of it, yet the genuineness of the *epistle to Diognetus* has been disputed.

(x) *Dr. Lardner’s Credibility, &c. Part 2. Vol. 2. p. 518.*

(y) *Νόμου καὶ προφητῶν ὁμοῦ, καὶ ἀποστόλων σὺν καὶ τῷ εὐαγγελίῳ. Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. 6. Origen* doth the same several times. See *Dr. Lardner’s Credibility, &c. Part 2. Vol. 3. p. 280.* To which add the following passage:—*ex omni loco Scripturarum, id est, five ex legis, five prophetarum, five ex Evangeliorum, five ex Apostolorum Scriptura. Orig. in Matt. 24. Traët 30. Edit. Basil.*

(z) *Τὰ ἀπομνημονεύματα τῶν Ἀποστόλων, ἢ τὰ συγγράμματα τῶν Προφητῶν ἀναγινώσκειται, μέχρις ἐγχαρῆ. Apolog. 2. pag. 98.*

preserved. I must further remind the Catechist, that *Justin Martyr's* way, was to *refer all things to the Scriptures*. (a) If the Catechist hath not recovered his sight yet, the following passage may assist his discernment a little, unless he is quite incurable. (b) “For the Apostles in the memoirs by them written, which are called “the Gospels, have thus delivered, &c.” So that, in *Justin Martyr's* style, the *tradition of the Apostles* is evidently what they have delivered in their writings. — In short, had he only considered, (as certainly became an enquirer after truth) what the learned *Stillfleet* (c) hath long since observed, and strongly urged, concerning *Justin Martyr's* sense, as to the point in question; the Catechist might have seen with half an eye, that what he hath alleged from this venerable Father, to support the authority of tradition, is altogether vain, trifling, and impertinent.

St. Irenæus.

A. D. “*St. Irenæus*, (as our Catechist goes 178. “on) *Speaking of the Hereticks in his day, has these words.* “When we “urge them with that tradition, which is derived from the Apostles, and has been preserved by the successions of the Presbyters in the Churches; they oppose tradition, saying they are wiser, not only than the Presbyters, “but

(a) Καὶ συν λόγοντος οὐκ ἡναιχόμεθα, εἰ μὴ πάντα ἐπὶ ταῖς γραφαῖς ἀνῆγες. *Dial. cum Tryph.* p. 277.

(b) Οἱ γὰρ Ἀπόστολοι ἐν τοῖς γενομένοις ὑπ' αὐτῶν ἀπομνημονεύμασι, ἃ καλεῖται Εὐαγγέλια, οὕτως παρέδωκαν, &c. *Apol.* 2.

(c) *Grounds of the Protestant Religion.* Part i. Chap. 3.

“ but also than the Apostles, and have found
 “ out the real truth.” — Very bold fellows,
 I confess! But, that we may learn, what rela-
 tion this passage hath to the point before us,
 and how far it tendeth to support the autho-
 rity of extra-scriptural tradition, for which it is
 produced; it will be requisite to consider the
 connection of the words as they lie in *Irenæus*.
 Which had the Catechist regarded, according
 to the rules of true criticism; he must have
 known, that, by his manner of quotation here
 also, he was grossly abusing his Reader, but
 at the dear expence of exposing himself. Let
 us then begin where *Irenæus* himself begineth;
 and so trace the connection of his ideas by the
 thread of his discourse, forward to the place
 cited by the Catechist. In his preface to that
 book *Irenæus* (d) proposeth, to confute the He-
 reticks out of the *Scriptures*, and thereby de-
 fend the only true faith, which the Church re-
 ceived from the Apostles. Accordingly thus he
 proceedeth, (e) “ For, we have not known
 “ the method of our salvation by any other
 “ persons than those, by whom the Gospel came
 “ to us. Which indeed they then *preached*, but
 “ afterward, by the will of God *delivered* to us

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(d) Ex Scripturis inferemus ostensiones. — Pro sola vera ac
 vivifica fide, quam ab Apostolis ecclesia percepit, &c. *Iren.*
advers. Næres. lib. 3. Præf. p. 198. Edit. Græbe.

(e) Non enim per alios dispositionem salutis nostræ cogno-
 vimus, quam per eos, per quos Evangelium pervenit ad nos:
 quod quidem tunc præconiaverunt, postea vero, per Dei vo-
 luntatem in Scripturis nobis tradiderunt, fundamentum & co-
 lumnâ fidei nostræ futuram. Nec enim fas est dicere, quo-
 niam antea prædicaverunt, quàm perfectam haberent agni-
 tionem; sicut quidam audent dicere, gloriantes emendatores
 se esse Apostolorum. *Iren. ibid. cap. 1.*

“ in the *Scriptures*, to be the ground and pillar
 “ of our faith for the future. For, it is not
 “ lawfull to say, that they begun to preach,
 “ before they had attained perfect knowledge,
 “ as some daring men pretend, boasting that
 “ they are the emendators of the Apostles.”
 — Again, (f) “ For when they are pressed
 “ with arguments from the *Scriptures* themselves;
 “ they turn to blaiming the *Scriptures*, as if
 “ they were not right, nor of any authority,
 “ and that they are differently expressed, and
 “ that it is impossible for those, to find out the
 “ truth from them, that are unacquainted with
 “ *tradition*.” [By the way, these antient He-
 retics would have passed among some persons in
 our days for good Catholics: they had learned
 the cant of the traditionary pedlers, and appear
 to be the first dealers in this kind of trafic.

But

(f) Cum enim ex *Scripturis* arguuntur, in accusationem
 convertuntur ipsarum *Scripturaram*, quasi nec recte ha-
 beant, neque sint ex autoritate, & quia variè sint dictæ, &
 quia non possit ex his inveniri veritas, ab his qui nesciant
 Traditionem. Non enim per literas traditam illam, sed per
 vivam vocem; ob quam causam & Paulum dixisse, Sapien-
 tiam autem loquimur inter perfectos; sapientiam autem non
 mundi hujus. Et hanc sapientiam unusquisque eorum esse
 dicit, quam a semet ipso adinvenit, fictionem videlicet, ut
 digne secundum eos sit veritas, aliquando quidem in Valentino,
 aliquando autem in Marcione, aliquando in Cerintho, postea
 deinde in Basilide: fuit et in illo, qui contra disputat, qui
 nihil salutare loqui potuit. Unusquisque enim ipsorum
 omnimodo perverius semetipsum, regulam veritatis depravans,
 prædicare non confunditur. Cum autem ad eam iterum Tra-
 ditionem, quæ est ab Apostolis, quæ per successiones Presby-
 terorum in Ecclesiis custoditur, provocamus eos, adversantur
 traditioni, dicentes se, non solum Presbyteris, sed etiam Apo-
 stolis existentes sapientiores, sinceram invenisse veritatem, &c.
 — Evenit itaque, neque *Scripturis* jam, neque Traditioni
 consentire eos. *Iren. ibid. cap. 2.*

But to proceed with the account of these primitive Advocates for tradition in the Christian Church] “ For it was not delivered by letters
 “ (or in writing) but by word of mouth ; [right
 “ again] for which reason *Paul* also said, we
 “ speak wisdom among them [that are perfect,
 “ but not the wisdom of this world. And
 “ this is the wisdom, which every one of them
 “ saith, he hath found out of himself ; namely
 “ a fiction, that the truth may worthily be with
 “ them : sometimes in *Valentinus*, and sometimes in
 “ *Marcion*, sometimes in *Cerintbus*, and then af-
 “ terward in *Bafilides*. Yes truly it was in him,
 “ who disputed against it ! Who could say no-
 “ thing that was wholesome. For each of them
 “ being altogether perverse, depraving the
 “ Rule of truth, is not ashamed to preach him-
 “ self. [then it follows] But *when* again, we
 “ appeal to that tradition, which is from the
 “ Apostles, and is preserved by the successions
 “ of the Presbyters, in the Churches, they op-
 “ pose tradition, saying, that being wiser, not
 “ only than the Presbyters, but even the Apostles,
 “ they have found out the real truth.—
 “ And thus it happens, that they agree, neither
 “ with the *Scriptures*, nor *Tradition*.”—If the
 Catechist had not a design to keep the Scriptures
 out of his Readers sight ; I cannot conceive (so
 barren is my invention) why he stopped short
 of these last words, which make so plain a distinction
 between Scripture and Tradition. But
 then, after all, what is the proper ground and
 meaning of this distinction ; as *Irenæus* has fairly
 and fully stated the case ? Why, truly no
 more than *this* : when the Heretics were urged
 with arguments from Scripture, and refused to
 yield,

yield, pretending contrary traditions; the Orthodox appealed to the common doctrine of the Christian Churches, as *agreeing* with the Scripture, but no way *supplementary* to it; and this is what *Irenæus* calleth by the name of tradition. For, the Orthodox appealed both to Scripture and tradition against the *same* Heretics, and the *same* errors. Consequently the doctrine of Scripture and tradition must be the same also; the latter being nothing but the succession of doctrine in the Christian Churches as perfectly conformable to the Scripture. Therefore, the Catechist's endeavour, to support his notion of tradition by this passage in *Irenæus*, is a vain and ridiculous attempt. Let us now see, whether he hath succeeded any better in his next adventure.

“ *And again:* The tradition of the Apostles manifested throughout the world lies open to the view of all such, as are desirous of the truth; and we can number up those, who by the Apostles were constituted Bishops in the Churches, and their successors down to our own days, *who taught no such things.*” (g) All very good! The Orthodox taught nothing, as *Irenæus* insisteth, but what agreed with the Scripture, which the traditionary Heretics contradicted and opposed. What becometh now of our Catechist's extra-scriptural or unwritten traditions? He hath reduced them, at last, to a mere negative, a very innocent and harmless thing. Remember, O ye Catechuments, that Orthodox tradition taught no unscriptural doctrines, but heretical tradition did; the latter

(g) —Qui nihil tale docuerunt, neque cognoverunt, qualē ab his deliratur. *Iren. ibid. cap. 3.*

opposed the Scripture, but the former accorded with it, and built upon it, as *the ground and pillar of our faith*. — But, the Catechist hath not yet done with *Irenæus*, though he hath almost undone himself, and ruined his cause by meddling with him.

“ *And in another place he saith: (h) what if*
 “ there should arise a dispute concerning any
 “ matter, though of no great consequence in
 “ itself; ought we not to recur to the most an-
 “ cient Churches, in which the Apostles were
 “ conversant, and inform ourselves of the truth
 “ of the debate? And what if the Apostles
 “ had left us no Scripture? Ought we not to
 “ follow the order of Tradition; which they
 “ delivered to those, to whom they committed
 “ the care of the Churches?” — Upon which
 passage I must remark. (1.) Since the Apostles *have* left us the Scripture for a Rule, to be *the ground and pillar of our faith*, as *Irenæus* had before declared; then by his own confession, and as his very words also imply, we are indispensably obliged to follow this rule. (2.) His words farther imply, that all matters of moment and importance are expressed, and determined, in the Scripture with sufficient clearness and perspicuity. Because, he only maketh the supposition, that a dispute might arise about some *small* matter or *question*. (3.) This small question, or matter of dispute, seemeth to respect the *proper sense and meaning* of Scripture, about some point of no great consequence, and more darkly expressed in Scripture. For (1) *Irenæus* had before declared, (as I have observ-
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(h) Quid autem? Et si quibus de aliqua modica questione disceptatio esset, &c. *Iren. ibid. cap. 4.*

ed more than once, but cannot repeat it too often) that the Christian doctrine as committed to writing by the Apostles is the ground and pillar of our faith, or, as he also termed it, the *rule of truth*: Therefore. (2) The standing rule of religion being fixed; whatever dispute or *question* in religion might arise, it could only relate to the proper meaning of that rule, which was to decide all questions in religion. (3) It must be remembered that *Irenæus* is here speaking with an eye to those heretics, who pretended the Scripture to be so obscure, as that the truth could not be learnt from thence without the help of tradition. In which case, (allowing the supposition, as to some *small question*, without granting it, at least in any weighty matter) *Irenæus* judged it the wiser way to have recourse to the most antient Churches for a solution of the difficulty, than to consult any novel and upstart heresies for the right understanding of the Scripture by the aid of pretended tradition. (i) One pretence of the heretics was, that the *Scriptures were differently expressed*, as we have seen before. And, if the *question* started had reference to a *various reading*; what could be so proper as to recur to the most antient Churches, in which the Apostles were conversant? Because, as *Tertullian* hath informed us, (k) the *Authentic writings* of the Apostles, were preserved in those Apostolical Churches.—I shall only add this further obser-

(i) Vid. *Le Clerc Hist. Eccles. A. D. 180. Sect. 2.*—
jam eo tandem redibat Quæstio, quinam essent traditionum
istius testes fide digniores? An scilicet Næratici; an potius
Orthodoxi Ecclesiastici? *Dodwell Diff. Iren. 4, 14.*

(k) —Percurre ecclesias Apostolicas—apud quas ipsæ Au-
thenticæ literæ eorum recitantur, &c. *Tertul. de Præscript*
advers. Næres. p. 108. Basil.

observation upon the passage before us. (4) The visible design of *Irenæus* here is, not to advance tradition as another rule of faith, different from the scripture; but only to confirm the scripture doctrine, and so corroborate his argument against the heresies, by the concurrent testimony of the Christian Churches. This is evident, both from the whole drift of his discourse, and likewise from what followeth. For thus he proceedeth.

(1) "To which order many barbarous Nations assent, who believe in Christ, without paper or ink, having salvation written in their hearts by the spirit, and diligently preserving the antient tradition, believing in one God, maker of heaven and earth and all things that are therein by Christ Jesus the Son of God, &c." Articles, which I presume the Catechist will not deny to be scripture doctrines. So idle is his pretence of supporting the authority of extra-scriptural traditions, by the testimony of the venerable *Irenæus*.

St Clement of Alexandria.

In reference to this Christian Faith A. D. the Catechist observes. "St. 194.

Clement of Alexandria saith. "Know- ledge itself (by which he means religious wisdom) descended by succession, to a few, from the Apostles, being delivered by unwritten tradition."

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(1) Cui ordinationi assentiant multæ gentes Barbarorum eorum qui in Christum credunt, sine chartâ vel atramento scriptam habentes per Spiritum in cordibus suis salutem, & veterem Traditionem diligenter custodientes, in unum deum credentes, fabricatorem cæli & terræ, & omnium quæ in eis sunt, per Christum Jesum Dei filium, &c. *Iren. ibid.*

"dition."—Well, at the last we have met with something, which seemeth to smile upon the *Traditionary* scheme. Unwritten tradition, descended by succession from the Apostles! But, what spoileth all, it descended only to a *few*. Oh! pity, that such a precious and valuable thing was not imparted to many, if many were concerned in it. On the other hand, if the bulk of Christians be unconcerned in it, all is safe still. As we want it not, so, I trust, we shall do well enough without this unwritten *wisdom itself*; if we duly attend to our written rule, designed for the common use, and benefit of all, let who will affect to be *wise above what is written*. Our sublime Catechist (who is so great an Adept, in the mystic theology; one undoubtedly of the happy few, who have received the *traditionary knowledge itself*.) would have mightily obliged the world, had he been so good, as to inform us, what this *knowledge itself* really was; if it be lawful to divulge the awful secret. But as this, you must know, is a branch of the greater mysteries; our initiated divine is so wise and cautious, as only to call it by the general name of *religious wisdom*. Yet remember, it is wisdom which descended only to a *few*; consequently, whatever this wisdom is, the religion of Christians in general hath nothing at all to do with it.—Might I presume to offer my humble opinion in the case, it is, in short, *this*, viz. that this *same knowledge*, which *Clemens Alexandrinus* had just before said, was contemplation; I say, *this same knowledge*; (m) consisted in certain

(m) *Clem. Alex. Strom.* lib. 6. p. 645. Edit. Paris. n. 2. *ὡς δὲ αὐτῶν, ἢ ἑκ.* which words the Catechist hath absurdly rendered, *Knowledge itself*, instead of, *This is the know-*

tain *mystical interpretations of scripture*. At the least, I shall take the liberty to think so, till the Catechist is pleased to inform me better; because I have good reason for what I say; which will be produced in a proper place. At present, I shall insert a pertinent observation of Abp. Tillotson, concerning *Origen*, the disciple of *St. Clement of Alexandria*. (n) “ Every one that hath been conversant in the writings of that Father, knows what he means by the Church’s tradition preserved by order of succession, viz. The mystical interpretations of scripture, which (saith he) were delivered by the Apostles to the governors of the Church, and by them down from hand to hand.” — I ask now, were not these governors of the Church, the very same persons, whom *Clement of Alexandria* meaneth by the *few*, to whom as he saith, the traditionary knowledge descended from the Apostles? And, is there not then sufficient ground to suppose, that both he, and *Origen*, his pupil, speak of the same kind of tradition? And thus, after all this mighty flourish about knowledge itself descending by unwritten tradition from the Apostles, be it known unto all men, that the scripture proveth to be the rule of religion, and the criterion of truth, because the traditionary knowledge itself, such as it was, according to these writers, was built upon the Scripture, as the text.

It may be proper in this place, to reflect a little upon the rise and progress of allegory, in the Christian Church. The learned *Le Clerc*,

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(o)

knowledge which, &c. referring to what *Clement* had been saying just before.

(n) *Rule of Faith, Part 4. Sect. 1.*

(o) supposeth, that the *Jews* derived it from the *Heathens*, and the Christians from the *Jews*. According to *Photius*, (p) *Philo Judeus* was the first, that introduced it among the Christians. This giveth Allegory an early date in the Christian Church, and also pointeth out the place, where it had its first rise, viz. *Alexandria*. We may be confirmed in this notion, by comparing the writings of *Philo*, and *Origen*, and *Cyril of Alexandria*; all of the same city; and by considering the great agreement that there is, in their allegorical manner of commenting upon the Scriptures. *Philo* was a *Jew*, when he was sent on the embassy to the Emperour *Caius*, mentioned by *Josephus*, (q) and whereof *Philo* himself wrote an account, (r) the time of which embassy *Bp. Usher* (s) hath fixed in the 40th. Year of the Christian æra. But, *Philo* is said afterwards to have turned Christian. (t) What gave him the greater influence, was his high rank, and great reputation among all sorts of persons: (v) and he must have lived many years after his embassy aforesaid, as appeareth by what *Eusebius* saith of his writings. (w) For, having spoken of *Philo's* association with *St Peter* at *Rome*, in the days of *Claudius*, successor to the emperour *Caius Caligula*, *Eusebius* giveth an account of a book, which he wrote

(o) *Hist. Eccles. in Prolegom. Sect. 1. Cap. 5, 8.*

(p) *In Biblioth. Cod. 105.* See his words afterwards produced.

(q) *J. Antiq. lib. 18. cap. 10.*

(r) *Vid. Philon. Op. Edit. Paris. p. 992, &c.*

(s) *Annal. Pars. post. p. 636, 640.*

(t) *Photius Biblioth. in Testim. ad Philon.*

(u) *Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. 2. cap. 4, & 5.*

(w) *Hist. Eccles. lib. 2. cap. 17.*

wrote a *long time after*. (x) To this add, that the writings of *Pbilo* (which were so much esteemed, as to be honoured with a place at the publick libraries at *Rome* (y)) might contribute more after his death to promote the use of allegory, than before. And the words of *Photius* seem to imply that allegory was first introduced into the Christian Church by *Pbilo's writings*. (z) All which things considered, it may be inferred that the spirit of allegory first began to possess the Christian writers soon after the Apostles days, and about the beginning of the second century. It must therefore have made a great progress at the time when *St. Clement of Alexandria*, the original source of Allegory, flourished. But, in answer to what *Photius* hath advanced, at least as his own opinion, concerning the first rise of Allegory in the Christian Church; it may be objected, that in the account, which *Pbilo* himself gave of the *Ascetics*, or *Therapeuts*, in *Egypt*, which *Eusebius* (a) took to be Christians, he represented them as much addicted to Allegory.—Now, to *this* the answer is short, viz. that *Eusebius* was mistaken, in taking them for Christians, as the learned *Valetius*, (b) after *Scaliger*, hath, I think, clearly proved. (c)

(x) Σύγγραμμα εἰς ὕψος καὶ μετὰ χρόνον αὐτῷ πεποιημένον. *Commentarius—multis post annis ab eo elaboratus. Valef. Euseb. ibid.*

(y) *Euseb. ibid. cap. 18.*

(z) Φέρεται δὲ αὐτοῦ πολλὰ καὶ ποικίλα συντάγματα, ἠθικὸς λόγος περιέχοντα, καὶ τῆς παλαιᾶς υπομνήματα, τὰ πλεῖστα πρὸς ἀλληγορίαν τοῦ γραμματος ἐκβαλλόμενα. Ἐξ οὗ οἶμαι καὶ πᾶς ὁ ἀλληγορικὸς τῆς γραφῆς ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ λόγος ἔχειν ἀρχὴν εἰσρῆναι. *Photius Biblioth. Cod.*

(a) *Hist. Eccles. lib. 2. cap. 17.*

(b) *Not. in Euseb. ibid.*

(c) 'Tis true Mr. *Bingham* (d) speaking of this very thing saith, "Some learned Criticks of the
 "last age [meaning *Scaliger*, and *Valesius*, afore-
 "said] call this whole matter into question;
 "but their arguments are answered by others
 "as learned:" refering only to Bp. *Beverege*,
 (e) who seemeth, however, not sufficiently to
 answer the main arguments advanced by those
 learned Criticks, although he suggesteth others,
 but in my opinion of unequal force, to support
 the notion of *Eusebius*. And even Mr. *Bingham*
 himself appeareth to me to speak somewhat dif-
 fidently of the matter, in another part of his
 elaborate work. (f) After all, we are not to
 suppose, that the use of Allegory was wholly
 unknown in the Christian Church, before the
 time above specified. For St. *Paul* himself
 made a sober use of it. (g) And the Parables
 of our blessed Saviour not only admitted, but
 required an allegorical interpretation. But, as
 the best things are liable to be abused; so no-
 thing could be a greater abuse of Scripture than
 to turn it all into parable; which was really the
 case at last. Witness those words of *Clemens*
Alex-

(c) See also *Cleric. Hist. Eccles. in Prolegom. Sect. 1. cap. 5. n. 15.*

(d) *Origines Eccles. Book 1. Chap. 1.*

(e) *Can. Vindic. lib. 3. cap. 5. n. 4.*

(f) *Book 7. Chap. 2. Vol. 3. pag. 34.*

(g) *Gal. iv. 24, 25.* See Mr. *Peirce's* excellent Note on the Place; and Mr. *Hallet*, Vol. 1. p. 53. But, rather than suppose with the latter, that τὸ Ἀγὰρ signifys the word Agar; I should take it to mean the place or the country Agar. For, though in common discourse words answer to things; yet in Allegory, one thing answers to another. That there was a country called by the name of Agar, *Vid. Schindl. Pentaglot. in Voc.*

Alexandrinus (to return again to our author) (h)

“ It is plainly written in the psalms, concern-
 “ ing the whole scripture that we have; as
 “ being spoken in parable, (i) give ear, O my
 “ people, to my law: incline your ears to the
 “ words of my mouth. I will open my mouth
 “ in Parables, I will utter problems, or dark
 “ sayings of old, or from the beginning. To the
 “ like purpose, also, the famous Apostle speak-
 “ eth thus. (k) Howbeit we speak wisdom
 “ among them that are perfect; yet not the
 “ wisdom of this world, nor the princes of this
 “ world, that come to nought. But, we speak
 “ the wisdom of God in a mystery, hidden &c.”

— This same learned Father, having just be-
 fore mentioned the words of the prophet *Isaiah*,
 (l) “ I will give thee the treasures of darkness,
 “ and hidden riches,” immediately addeth;
 (m) “ Now the treasures of God, and the ne-
 “ ver failing riches are the *wisdom which is hard*
 “ *to be bunted out*,” meaning the mystical and
 allegorical sense of scripture. —

And now, if I am not greatly mistaken, we
 have made a useful discovery, and found out
 what the *religious wisdom, that knowledge itself was*
which descended by succession to a few, from the Apostles

(h) Ἀντικρυς γοῦν περὶ πάσης γραφῆς τῆς καθ' ἡμᾶς, ἐν τοῖς ψαλμοῖς γέγραπται, ὡς ἐν παραβολῇ εἰρημάνης. — Ἀκούσατε λαός μου τὸν νόμον μου. Κλίνειτε τὸ οὖς ὑμῶν ἐκ τὰ ῥήματα τοῦ στόματός μου. Ἀνόξω ἐν παραβολαῖς τὸ στόμά μου φθίζομαι πρὸς ῥήματα ἀπ' ἀρχῆς. Καὶ ὁ γενναῖος Ἀπόστολος τὰ ὅμοια ᾧδε πῶς λέγει, &c. *Clem. Alex. Strom. 5. pag. 557.*

(i) Psalm lxxviii. 1, 2.

(k) 1 Cor. ii. 6, 7, &c.

(l) Isaiah xlv. 3.

(m) Θησαυροὶ δὲ τοῦ Θεοῦ καὶ πλοῦτος ἀνεκλεπτῆς, ἡ δυνάμει-
 γατός ἐστι σοφία. *Clem. Alex. ibid.*

bles, being delivered by unwritten tradition. (n) For according to a judicious remark of the learned Suicer (o) “ The Fathers sometimes call that an “ *unwritten tradition*, which is contained, not “ indeed in the words, but only in the *sense* “ of Scripture.”—And thus the scripture proveth to be the rule of religion, in respect to this kind of traditionary knowledge, as I hinted before; and whether I had not some reason for what I said, I now leave the impartial Reader to judge, and proceed to attend the Catechist, in his further citations from St. Clement of Alexandria.

“ *Again*: In the truth alone, and the anti-
“ ent Church is the most perfect knowledge.”
— Now, this is only part of a sentence; I will produce the whole, and then leave the passage to speak for itself. (p) “ There being then “ such a thing as demonstration, it is necessary “ to descend to the questions, and learn de- “ monstratively from the *Scriptures themselves*, “ that the heresies, [or sects] have indeed fallen “ into error, but that *in the truth alone, and in “ the antient Church is the most perfect knowledge,* “ and the most excellent sect indeed.”—Honest Reader, this passage, which so expressly speak-
eth

(n) — Ἀγράφως παραδοθεῖσα—Clem. Alex. Strom. 6. pag. 645. Edit. Paris.

(o) Huc etiam referri potest παράδοσις ἀγραφος, traditio nonscripta, quam Patres non nunquam vocant, quæ non Scripturæ quidem verbis, sed sensu tantum continetur. I. Casp. Suicer. Thef. Eccles. in Voc. παράδοσις.

(p) Αποδείξεως δ' οὐσιν, ἀνάγκη συγκαταβαίνειν εἰς τὰς ζητήσεις, καὶ δι' αὐτῶν τῶν γραφῶν ἐκμανθάνειν ἀποδεικτικῶς, ὅπως μὲν ὁπιοσφάλισαν αἱ αἱρέσεις, ὅπως δὲ καὶ ἐν μόνῃ τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, καὶ ἀρχαίᾳ Ἐκκλησίᾳ ἦτε ἀκριβεστάτη γνώσις, καὶ ἡ τῷ ὄντι ἀρίστη αἴρεσις. Clem. Alex. Strom. 7. pag. 755.

eth of *Scripture* knowledge and truth, was alleged by the Catechist, to support the authority of unscriptural knowledge, or unwritten tradition! Who then should blush, to see himself detected in such a gross misrepresentation? "Is this the man who undertook to answer for the truth of what is delivered in the book of Catechisms?" (q) But, what name doth he deserve, who artfully disguiseth the truth, with a design to deceive; and then, to cover the cheat, setteth a grave face on the shameful imposture? And yet sorry I am to say it, this is not the only fault of the kind, by many, that the Catechist hath committed, in his manner of citing Authors. We have another fair specimen of his great integrity in the next quotation; which is this, "*And once more*: Now, this being the case, it is clear from the most antient and most true Church, that these modern heresies are innovations. From what hath been said, I think it is plain, that there is one true Church, the really antient one. — We say, that the antient and catholic Church, is the only Church. As the doctrine of all the Apostles was one, so was their tradition." — It was, I suppose, for the sake of this last word tradition, that our Catechist produced these passages; but, to how little purpose, as to his main design, any one may see at a single glance, by considering the connection, scope, and design of the words, in the author's discourse. Because, *Clemens Alexandrinus*, calleth that the antient and only true Church, which had all along adhered to the doctrine of the *Scriptures*, without corrupting or perverting them, as the upstart heresies had done, by their

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(q) See the Advertisement at the end.

unscriptural traditions. That this is the real truth of the matter, will evidently appear, upon reviewing the whole series and order of his discourse, in that place, for many pages together. To begin then eight or nine pages back, and so proceed forward to the citation before us:

Clemens Alexandrinus complaineth (r) that the licentious heretics wrested the *Scripture* to their own lusts. He saith, (s) “if they had any faculty of discerning between truth and error, “they would obey the *divine Scriptures.*” — Having mentioned those, who spurn at ecclesiastical tradition, and thereby fall into error; he addeth by way of contrast: (t) “He, that attendeth to the *Scriptures*, converteth his life “to the truth.” So that *Scripture* and Ecclesiastical tradition were the same in his account. — After he had observed how the heretics had tortured the *Scriptures*, he saith, (v) “They “have no way to establish their opinions as they “offer violence to the *Scriptures.*” — Again: (w) “Not having learned the mysteries of Ecclesiastical knowledge, nor comprehending “the amplitude of truth—they *dismiss the Scriptures.*” Here we may perceive, in confirmation of what hath been before advanced concerning the

(r) Βιάζονται πρὸς τὰς ἐπιθυμίας τὴν γραφὴν. *Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. 7. pag. 756. Op. Edit. Paris.*

(s) — Εἰ γὰρ ἐκέκνητο ταῖς δόξαις ἐπέδοντο ἂν γραφαῖς. *Ibid.*

(t) Κατακούσας τῶν γραφῶν καὶ τὸν ἐαυτοῦ βίον ἐπιστρέψας τῇ ἀληθείᾳ, *Ec. pag. 757.*

(v) Οὐτ’ ἔχουσιν ὅπως διαδόνται τὰς αὐτῶν δόξας, βιάζομενοι τὰς γραφάς. *Pag. 758.*

(w) Μὴ γὰρ μαθόντες τὰ τῆς γνώσεως τῆς Ἐκκλησιαστικῆς μυστήρια, μηδὲ χρησάντες τὸ μεγαλεῖον τῆς ἀληθείας—παρεπέμψαντο τὰς γραφάς. *Pag. 759.*

the knowledge conveyed by unwritten tradition, that the *mysteries of Ecclesiastical knowledge*, contained in the full *amplitude of truth*, were grounded upon the Scripture. But to proceed with our author; who in the same page hath these words; (x) “ They patch up a great many lies and “ fictions, that they may seem to reject the “ *Scriptures*, with some colour of reason.”—— In opposition therefore to this course, which the heretics took, he proceedeth to observe, (y) “ We must not desert the order assigned us by “ *the word*, which we have received, to be our “ guide, or leader, both in knowledge and “ practice.”——Of the same class of men he saith, (z) “ They do not follow God, as he “ leadeth; for, he leadeth by the *divinely-inspired “ Scriptures*.”——With an eye to the high-flown pretences of the heretics to superior knowledge, affecting to be wise *above what was written*, he declareth. (a) “ He is the only Gnostic, or “ man of knowledge with us, who being long “ conversant in the *Scriptures* themselves, and “ preserving the Apostolical and Ecclesiastical “ rectitude of opinions, liveth most conformably “ to the *Gospel*.” Here again we see, that Apostolical and Ecclesiastical, and scriptural doctrines,

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trines,

(x) Ἀμέλει πάμπολλα συγκατΐθουσι ψεύσματα καὶ πλάσματα, ἵνα δὴ εὐλογως δέξωσι μὴ προσέειδαι τὰς γραφάς. *Ibid.*

(y) Ὅυδ' ἦν ἔδωκεν ὁ λόγος, ὃν ἄρχοντα εἰλήφαμεν γνώσεώς τε καὶ βίαν, λεπτόν τε τάξιν. pag. 760.

(z) Οἱ μὴ ὑπόμενοι Θεῷ, εἰάν ηἰγῆται: ἡγῆται δὲ κατὰ τὰς θεοπνευστοῦς γραφάς. pag. 761.

(a) Ὁ γνωσικὸς ἀρὰ ἡμῖν μόνος ἐν αὐταῖς καταγρησάσαι ταῖς γραφαῖς, τὴν Αποστολικὴν καὶ Ἐκκλησιαστικὴν σάξαν ὁρδοτομίαν τῶν δογμάτων, κατὰ τὸ Εὐαγγελίου ὁρδοτάτα βιοῖ. pag. 762, 763.

trines, relating either to faith or practice, are all one and the same.—Farther yet. (b) “ Men ought never, saith *Clement*, as those that follow heresies do, to adulterate the *truth*, nor to steal the *rule of the Church*, to gratify their own lust and ambition.” How the heretics those antient tradition mongers did this, he had largely shewn before, viz. by depraving the Scripture, and by substituting another rule of religion in the room of it, by their unscriptural tenets. But, for a serious warning to all such men he telleth them. (c) “ As many as deceive with their tongues (or use *oral frauds*) have *written punishments*.” In conclusion of all, this learned Father observeth, (d) “ It doth not require many words, to prove that these cabals of the heretics are of a later date than the catholic Church, &c.” And then come in the words cited by the Catechist. (e) “ Now this being the case, it is clear from the most antient, and most true Church, that these modern heresies are innovations, &c. &c.” namely, because the latter departed from the Scriptures, the original rule of religion, to which the antient Church firmly adhered. And thus con-

(b) Οὐ γὰρ χρή ποτε, καθάπερ οἱ τὰς αἵρέσεις μετίοντες ποιοῦσι, μοιχεύειν τὴν ἀλήθειαν, οὐδὲ μὴν κλέπειν τὸν κανόνα τῆς Ἐκκλησίας, ταῖς ἰδιαιῖς ἐπιθυμίαις καὶ φιλοδοξίαις χαρίζομένους. pag. 764.

(c) Ὅσοι δὲ ταῖς γλώσσαις αὐτῶν δολιοῦσιν, ἔγγραφα ἔχουσι τὰ ἐπίβητα. *ibid.*

(d) Ὅτι γὰρ μεταγενεσέρας τῆς καθολικῆς Ἐκκλησίας τὰς ἀνθρωπινὰς συνηλύσεις πεποιθήκασιν, οὐ πολλὰν δεῖ λόγων. pag. 764.

(e) Ὡς οὕτως ἔχόντων, συμφανὲς ἐκ τῆς προγενεσάτης καὶ ἀληθεστάτης Ἐκκλησίας, τὰς μεταγενεσέρας ταύτας, καὶ τὰς ἐν ταύταις ὑποβεβηκυίας, τῷ χρόνῳ κεκαينهλομένηται παραχαραχθέντας αἵρέσεις, &c. *ibid.*

considered in their natural and just connection. it is easy to understand the proper meaning of those words, upon which, I suppose the Catechist layeth the greatest stress. For when St. *Clement* saith, (f) “ As the doctrine of all the “ Apostles was one so was their tradition ;” these words are directly levelled against those men, who contended for unscriptural doctrines ; as manifestly appeareth, from what hath been observed, in relation to the main drift and design of the discourse for many pages together. Therefore the true meaning of the said words can only be *this* ; either, that, as the Apostles did all *preach*, the same doctrine at the beginning, without contradicting one another ; so they delivered the same doctrine to posterity in their writings : or, as the doctrine of all the Apostles committed to writing was the same ; so they delivered nothing by word of mouth, but the same that is contained in the Scripture. Consequently the heretics, by receding from the Scripture, departed from the true doctrine of the Apostles.

And now, what must the world think of our *nameless* Catechist, for perverting the plain and obvious meaning of the authors he quoteth, and for quoting them to a sense, and to serve a purpose, diametrically opposite to what was by them intended ? If this be not, I desire any one to inform me what is, acting the part of an imposture ; how high soever he may bear himself upon the motto, assumed in his Title page. (g) The most charitable construction that can be put upon

(f) Μία γὰρ ἡ πάντων γέγονε τῶν Ἀποστόλων ὡς περ διδασκαλία, οὕτως δὲ καὶ ἡ παράδοσις. pag. 765.

(g) — *As deceivers and yet true.* 2 Cor. vi. 8.

upon his behaviour, as a writer upon the point in debate, is to suppose, that he never read the original authors themselves, whom he so roundly quoteth; but took his quotations upon trust, at the second or third hand, from a sett of unconfionable writers, who stick at nothing, to serve a turn. So that, I fear, the words of the great *Stillingfleet* are too applicable in the present case. (h) “ Though you love to make a great
 “ noise with antiquity, among persons meanly
 “ conversant in it; yet those, who do seriously
 “ and impartially inquire into the sense of the
 “ primitive Church, and not guess at it, by the
 “ shreds of citations to their hands, in their own
 “ writers (which is generally your way) will
 “ scarce in any thing, more palpably discern
 “ your jugling and imposture, than in your
 “ pretence to antiquity.” So said *the Hannibal*
and terroure of modern Rome; as he is styled by
 another great ornament of *the Church of En-*
gland. (i)

Tertullian.

A. D. It is superfluous to examine distinctly all the passages produced by the
 200. Catechist, from this antient Writer; because, upon the bare reading, the greater part of them appear at the first sight impertinent to the design of proving the authority of extra-scriptural tradition. *Tertullian* argueth against the heretics, in the very same manner,
 . as

(h) *Stillingfleet's Grounds of the Protestant Religion. Part 1. Chap. 3.*

(i) *Abp Tenison on Idolatry, Chap. 10. Part 1.*

as we have seen *Irenæus* and *St. Clement of Alexandria* reason before ; that is to say, from the general harmony and agreement of doctrine in the Christian Churches, with the doctrine of *Christ and his Apostles* ; in opposition to the unscriptural and antiscryptural opinions maintained by the heretics. In this view precisely, we are to consider all that the Catechist hath alleged from *Tertullian's book of prescriptions* ; as any judicious Reader will observe, especially by comparing *Tertullian's* way of reasoning there, with the strain of discourse in *Clemens Alexandrinus*, above. Therefore I readily acquiesce in these words of *Tertullian*, and can heartily subscribe to them. (k) “ It is not lawful for us to introduce any thing of our own heads, nor to make choice of that, which any one has introduced of his own head. We are the followers of our *Lord's Apostles*, who did not even themselves introduce any thing of their own heads, but faithfully delivered to the nations the discipline, which they had received from *Christ*.” I say, I readily acquiesce in *this*, and what followeth, (l) to the remarkable passage (m) as the Catechist calls it. And indeed,

(k) *Nobis vero nihil ex nostro arbitrio indulgere licet, sed nec eligere quod aliquis de arbitrio suo induxerit. Apostolos domini habemus auctores, qui nec ipsi quicquam ex suo arbitrio quod inducerent, elegerunt: sed acceptam a Christo disciplinam fideliter nationibus assignaverunt. Tertullian de Præscript.* p. 97. Ed. Basil.

(l) *Catechism.* p. 198, — 200.

(m) “ That is truest, which is earliest ; That is earliest, which was from the beginning ; and That was from the beginning, which was from the Apostles : and from the same way of reasoning it will plainly appear, that That was delivered by the Apostles, which was received and confirmed.”

deed, it is very remarkable, that neither that passage, nor any of the preceeding ones, inclusively from the forementioned period, are in the least pertinent to the matter in hand. Why the Catechist produced them at all in this place, I cannot imagine, unless it was to raise a dust before the Reader's eyes, and make a great shew of saying something, though nothing to the purpose. However, to gratify the curious Reader, I shall give him the *remarkable passage*; and then leave him to make his own remarks upon it, as produced in the margin (m). But, I confess, the Catechist hath two citations from *Tertullian*, which deserve consideration; because they seem to give some countenance to the Traditionary scheme.

“ *Tertullian speaks thus, (n)* “ Let us enquire
 “ whether no *tradition* but what is *written* ought
 “ to be received? Indeed we should reject
 “ it, if we were incapable of producing
 “ any instance of other practices, which with-
 “ out any Scripture-record we vindicate up-
 “ on the authority of tradition, and the
 “ patronage of custom consequent thereupon.”

—Now, upon this passage I must remark, that this is the answer, which *Tertullian* gave to those persons, who objected that, where tradition is pleaded, a written authority should be produced. A plain indication that the *Scripture* was the rule, to which all appeals in questions of religion were wont to be made. And, how doth *Tertullian* get off the objection? Only by an argument *ad hominem*, which is not absolutely conclusive; and by urging

“ *firmed by the Apostolick churches.*” *Contra Marcion lib. 4.*

(n) *Ergo quædamus, an et traditio non scripta non debeat recipi, &c. De Coron. Milit. p. 449.*

urging that several other things, which he afterward specifieth, were then practised among Christians, without any Scripture warrant. It is possible, however, that these very customs might be left *undetermined* by the Apostles, as being indifferent in their own nature, and therefore *variable* as human prudence should direct: Or, that they were originally founded upon the Scripture, *by some kind of interpretation*; (o) but, as they had so slender a foundation in Scripture, that those who came after, were not able to discern upon what Scripture grounds they were first introduced; from hence they might conclude, that such things were derived from tradition, irrespectively to the written word. This appeareth to have been *Tertullian's* opinion, according to the humour he was in, when he wrote the treatise before us, by what he saith in the other citation from it, which is as followeth, (p)

“ *So again*, If I can find no where a law, it follows, that this custom is founded upon tradition, and must be reasonably interpreted to have some time had the authority of an Apostle.”——To which I reply: How doth this appear to be a reasonable interpretation? For my own part, I can see no consequence at all, in what *Tertullian* here saith. If neither he, nor any one else, could properly find a law in the Scriptures for such and such things: yet a *pious fancy* might imagine some ground for them in the holy Scriptures: and so being once introduced upon this foot, and in process of time confirmed by custom, they might easily pass for Apostolical

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(o) See the *Inquiry into the original of unwritten traditions*. Sect. 3.

(p) *Tertul. ibid.*

cal unwritten traditions, when their true original came to be unknown or forgotten. So much for the *force and strength of his reasoning*.—But *Tertullian* hath declared his *opinion*, and that is enough for the Catechist. Nor ought we to grudge him this testimony, which, after many fruitless attempts, is the first he hath been able to produce, with any tollerable propriety, in favour of his hypothesis. However, before we dismiss him from the bar, I must take the liberty to cross-examine this witness a little, in order to determine the *weight of his authority*. For, if we should catch him tripping, contradicting himself, and saying inconsistent things, I shall claim the privilege of setting his evidence aside.

Now, certain it is, that *Tertullian* was a man of a warm and zealous, but of a feeble, inconsistent temper. So that, according to the humour he was in, he would plead for custom, or against it, just as it served a present turn. Thus e. g. when custom was urged against him, in another case; he maketh no account of it at all, saying (q) (and very justly) “Against truth
“ there is no prescription, neither from length
“ of time, nor from the patronage of persons,
“ nor from the privilege of countries. For, it
“ is

(q) *Hoc exigere veritatem, cui nemo præscribere potest, non spatium temporum, non patrocinia personarum, non privilegium regionum. Ex his enim fere consuetudo, initium ab aliqua ignorantia vel simplicitate sortita, in usum per successionem corroboratur, et adversus veritatem vindicatur. Sed Dominus noster Christus veritatem se, non consuetudinem, cognominavit.—Quodcunque adversus veritatem sapit, hoc erit hæresis, etiam vetus consuetudo.—Regula quidem fidei una omnino est, sola, immobilis, et irreformabilis.—Hac lege fidei manente, cætera jam disciplinæ, & conversationis admittunt novitatem correctionis. De Virg. Veland. p. 430.*

“ is commonly owing to these, that custom,
 “ having taken its rise from some mistake or weak-
 “ nesses, is by succession confirmed into use, and so de-
 “ fended against the truth. But our Lord Christ
 “ called himself *the truth*, not custom.—What-
 “ ever is contrary to the truth will be heresy,
 “ though it be antient custom.—Indeed the rule
 “ of faith is absolutely one, alone, unalterable, and
 “ irreformable.—This law of faith remaining,
 “ other things now relating to discipline and
 “ conversation admit the novelty of correction,
 “ or *new alterations*.”—Thus, we see *the great*
Tertullian, one while pleading for innovations,
 at another time for antient customs. Since there-
 fore his authority destroyeth itself, it proveth no-
 thing, but becometh *evanescent*. Upon another
 occasion, if the Catechist think his words wor-
 thy of any notice, *Tertullian* saith, (r) “ After
 “ Christ, we have no need of curiosity; nor,
 “ after the Gospel, of farther enquiry.” And
 again, (s) “ Take away from the heretics what
 “ they have in common with the heathens, that
 “ they may support their questions, (or contro-
 “ verted opinions) by the Scriptures alone, and
 “ they cannot stand.” Here then we have
Tertullian himself appealing to the Scripture as
 the criterion of truth in questions of Religion.
 In short, when he was in a good mood, he
 could *adore the fulness of scripture*. (t) And
 forever to exclude all unscriptural pretensions, he

G 2

faith

(r) *Nobis curiositate opus non est post Christum, nec inquisitione post Evangelium. De Præscript. p. 98.*

(s) *Aufer denique hæreticis, quæ cum Ethnicis sapiunt, ut de Scripturis solis quæstiones suas fistant, et stare non poterunt. Lib. de Resurrec. Carn. p. 47.*

(t) *Adoro Scripturæ plenitudinem. Advers. Hermog. p. 346.*

faith (v) "What the Scripture doth not note,
"it disowneth."

After all ; did not the Catechist know, that the books, which he hath cited, were wrote by *Tertullian*, after he was turned Montanist? (w) How then, consistently with his own principles, could he quote this writer, as *a Father*, when he was not so much as a Son of the Catholic Church? (x) And so, good night to *Tertullian*.

Origen.

A. D. Next to *Tertullian*, cometh forth *Origen*,
230. a couple of unfainted Fathers.

We have before had *St. Barnabas*, *St. Ignatius*, *St. Polycarp*, *St. Justin Martyr*, *St. Irenæus*, *St. Clement of Alexandria*; and now, after all these Saints, follow plain *Tertullian*, and plain *Origen*. The Catechist, who is so great a master of language and diction, and so well versed in ecclesiastical literature, had a reason for this variation of stile. And, how far it may be consistent in him, to lay any stress upon the authority of two writers, under the notion of Christian fathers, who were branded with heresie and schism, is left to his maturer consideration. But to let that pass, and proceed with *Origen*.

" *Origen*

(v) *Negat Scriptura, quod non notat. De Monogam. p. 573.*

(w) See Dupin *Eccles. Hist. Cent. 3. of Tertullian.*

(x) *Et de Tertulliano quidem nihil amplius dico, quàm Ecclesie hominem non fuisse. Hieron. Advers. Helvid. cap. 9.*

“ *Origen hath told us :* (y) “ That the Church
 “ received a tradition from the Apostles to ad-
 “ minister baptism also to Infants.” — The
 Reader must know, that *Origen* is there dis-
 coursing of Original Sin, and so he saith, “ *On*
 “ *this account* the Church received a tradition
 “ from the Apostles, &c.” And thus the plain
 and obvious meaning of his words is only *this*,
 that Original Sin is the ground and reason of
 infant-baptism, as instituted by the Apostles.
 Speaking of the same thing in another place he
 hath these words, (a) “ Since the baptism of the
 “ Church is administred for the remission of
 “ Sins; it may be asked, what is the reason that,
 “ according to the custom of the Church, bap-
 “ tism is administred to infants also; when the
 “ grace of baptism would seem superfluous, if
 “ there was nothing in children which can be
 “ the object of pardon and indulgence?”

And again : (b) “ Because natural pollution
 “ is taken away by the sacrament of baptism;
 “ for this reason children also are baptised.”
 The same ground of infant-baptism is assigned
 by *St. Augustin*, who insisted therefore that by
 denying Original Sin, the *Pelagians* took away
 the

(y) Pro hoc et ecclesia ab Apostolis traditionem suscepit,
 etiam parvulis baptismum dare. *Origen, ad Rom. lib. 5.*
cap. 6. Vol. 2. p. 427. Edit. Basil.

(a) —Requiratur quid causa sit, cum baptismum ecclesiæ
 in remissionem peccatorum detur, secundum ecclesiæ observan-
 tiam etiam parvulis baptismum dare: cum utique, si nihil
 esset in parvulis, quod ad remissionem deberet, & indulgentiam
 pertinere, gratia baptismi superflua videretur. In *Levit.*
Cap. 12, 13. Hom. 8. Vol. 1. p. 162.

(b) Et quia per baptismi sacramentum natiuitatis sordes
 deponuntur, propterea baptizantur et parvuli. In *Luc. Cap. 2.*
Hom. 14. Vol. 2. p. 256.

the necessity of *infant-baptism*. But the *Pelagians* maintained the contrary. (c) Besides, as a learned writer hath observed, (d) “ *St. Augustin* also saith, that *infant-baptism* is an Apostolical tradition; and yet undertaketh to “ prove it from the Scripture.” Therefore the words of *Origen*, cited by the Catechist, are far from implying, that *infant-baptism* is an extra-scriptural tradition. And, I dare venture to say, that neither *Origen*, nor the Catechist supposed, that *infant-baptism* hath no foundation in the Scripture.

And again: (e) “ As there are many, who “ imagine, that they think agreeably to Christ’s “ doctrine, and yet some of them think differently from those who went before them; let “ the ecclesiastical preaching be preserved, “ which was delivered from the Apostles, by “ the order of succession, and remains in the “ churches to this day; for that truth only is to “ be believed, which in nothing swerves from “ ecclesiastical tradition.”—Upon which passage it is obvious to remark, that *Origen* here talketh in the very same strain, with his worthy master, *St. Clement of Alexandria*, when the latter is arguing, as we have seen before, against the unscriptural doctrines of the traditionary heretics, from the constant uniform doctrine of the Christian Church, as agreeing with the Scripture, and founded upon it. Therefore the true antient Scripture doctrine, as it had been all
along

(c) *Vid. Voss. Hist. Pelag. lib. 2. Part 2. Th. 4.*

(d) *Sic Augustinus de Genesi, ad literam, lib. 10. Cap. 23. Dicit, Pædobaptismum esse traditionem Apostolicam: quam tamen probat e Scripturis, lib. 4. de Baptismo contra Donatist. Cap. 24. Suicer. Thesaur. Eccl. in Παράδοσις.*

(e) *Origen de Princip. in Præf. Vol. 1. p. 765.*

along maintained in the Churches, is all that *Origen* can be fairly understood to intend, “ by
 “ the ecclesiastical preaching, which was deliver-
 “ ed from the Apostles, by the order of succes-
 “ sion.” In proof of this, I appeal to his own
 words, in the very same page; where he spe-
 cifieth, in sundry particulars of the Scripture
 doctrine, (as least, as he understood it) what the
 Apostolical preaching, and the ecclesiastical tra-
 dition was. For thus *Origen* proceedeth. (f)
 “ Now, the species, (or particulars) of those
 “ things, which are plainly *delivered* by the
 “ *Apostolical preaching* are these. First, that there
 “ is one God, who created and formed all
 “ things, and who made all things to exist
 “ out of nothing, &c.” And will the Cate-
 chist pretend that these are extra-scriptural doc-
 trines, or unwritten traditions? But he hath
 not yet done with this author.

“ *And once more*, (g) But, we should not be-
 “ lieve them, nor depart from the first and
 “ ecclesiastical tradition, nor believe otherwise
 “ than as the Churches of God have, by suc-
 “ cession, delivered to us.”—All exactly to the
 same purpose, as before, and not a single word
 of extra-scriptural tradition! *Origen* is here speak-
 ing against the heretics, who endeavoured to
 establish their false opinions, by different methods,
 sometimes by perverting the Scripture, some-
 times by apocryphal writings, and sometimes by
 tradition, without any pretence of Scripture at
 all. And thus, what he inculcateth in oppositi-
 on

(f) *Species vero eorum, quæ per prædicationem Apostolicam
 manifeste traduntur, istæ sunt. Primo quod unus Deus est, qui
 omnia creavit atque composuit, quique ex nullis fecit esse uni-
 versa, &c. Orig. ibid.*

(g) *Orig. in Matt. cap. 24. Vol. 2. p. 166.*

on to them, is nothing more or less, than the true Scripture doctrine, as it was at the first received, and had been all along successively preserved and maintained by the Churches of God. In confirmation of this account, I shall now transcribe the words of *Origen*, in the context: where, in his customary, allegorical manner, he is commenting upon those words of Christ (h) *And except those days should be shortened, &c.*

“ Days

(h) Matt. xxiv. 22, — 28. *Et nisi abbreviati essent dies illi, &c.* — Dies enim intelliguntur præcepta et dogmata veritatis posita Scripturis, ad illuminationem intelligentium animarum. Omnes autem intellectus a scientia falsi nominis venientes, qui adduntur sermonibus Scripturarum et conjunguntur, intellige mihi additamenta esse supra magnitudinem naturalem dierum Scripturæ. — Et quotiescunque videris adventu verbi veritatis in sensu tuo præcidi altitudines extolles te adversus scientiam Dei; toties intellige abbreviatos dies tribulationis, et circumfissum superfluum magnitudinem, quam contra naturam abominatio desolationis semper superaddit diebus domini, qui sunt in Scripturis. Et propter electos abbreviantur dies illi, ut videntes in sensu suo præcisionem superfluitatis dierum, et remanentem illam solummodo lucem, quæ secundum verbum est veritatis, nihil patiantur a desolationis abominatione, vel ab eo, quod additum fuerat super veros et naturales dies Scripturarum. Tunc, si quis vobis dixerit, Ecce, hic Christus, &c. — Sic impletur quod ait, Ecce hic Christus, ecce illic, ostendens non Christum, sed aliquem fictum ejusdem nominis: ut puta secundum Marcionis doctrinam, et secundum traditiones Valentini, aut Basilidis longam fabulositatem, aut secundum Apellis adversus Paulum testimonium. — Sed nos illis credere non debemus, nec exire a prima et Ecclesiastica traditione, nec aliter credere, nisi quemadmodum per successionem Ecclesiæ Dei tradiderunt nobis. — Veritas enim similis est fulguri egredienti ab oriente et apparenti usque ad occidentem. Qualis est veritas ecclesiæ Dei — Scire debemus et illud; quoniam veritatis fulgor non aliquo quidem Scripturarum loco apparet, ex alio autem Scripturarum loco non defenditur, sed ex omni loco Scripturarum, id est, sive ex legis, sive prophetarum, sive ex evangeliorum, sive ex Apostolorum Scriptura defenditur. *Origen in Math. Cap. 24. Op. Vol. 2. p. 165, 166.*

“ Days [saith he] denote the precepts and
 “ doctrines of truth, which are laid down in
 “ *the Scriptures* for the illumination of intelligent
 “ minds. But all notions preceeding from sci-
 “ ence falsely so called, which are added to the
 “ *Scriptures*, and conjoined with them, I take to
 “ be additions above, or beyond, the natural
 “ magnitude of the Scripture *days*. — And,
 “ whenever you see, by the coming of the
 “ word of truth in your understanding those
 “ *high things* prescinded, *which exalt themselves*
 “ *against the knowledge of God*; then know that
 “ the days of tribulation are shortened, and the
 “ superfluous magnitude cut off, which, contrary
 “ to nature, *the abomination of desolation* always
 “ superaddeth to the days of the Lord, which
 “ are in the *Scriptures*. And *for the elects sake*
 “ *those days are shortened*; that perceiving in their
 “ minds the superfluous days cut off, and that
 “ light alone remaining, which is according to
 “ the *word of truth*, they may suffer nothing by
 “ the *abomination of desolation*, or by that which
 “ is added, above, the true and natural days
 “ of the *Scriptures*. Then, if any one shall say un-
 “ to you, *lo here is Christ*, &c. Thus is fulfilled
 “ what he saith, *lo here is Christ, lo there*:
 “ shewing not Christ, but some impostor, un-
 “ der that name, according, suppose, to the
 “ doctrine of *Marcion*, and according to the
 “ traditions of *Valentinus*, or to the long fables
 “ of *Basilides*, or according to *Appelles*’s false
 “ testimony of Paul. — But we should not believe
 “ them, nor depart from the first and ecclesiastical tra-
 “ dition, nor believe otherwise, than as the Churches
 “ of God have by succession delivered to us. — For
 “ truth is like the lightning which cometh from the
 H east,

“ east, and shineth even unto the west. Such is
 “ the truth of the Church of God.—But this, we
 “ ought to know likewise, that the light of
 “ truth doth not appear from one place of
 “ *Scripture*, without being supported by any
 “ other place of the *Scriptures*, but it is sup-
 “ ported by every place of the *Scriptures*, that
 “ is, either from the *Scripture* of the law, or
 “ of the Prophets, or of the Gospels, or of the
 “ Apostles.”

Gentle Reader, excuse this long quotation ;
 for I would have contracted the words of *Origen*,
 into a narrower compass, if I could have
 done it, without disturbing the sense, and in-
 terrupting the connection of his discourse. And
 now, I appeal to any one, whether in the passage
 cited by the Catechist, in support of extra-scrip-
 tural traditions, *Origen* is not urging, on the con-
 trary, a steady adherence to the *true Scripture*
doctrine, as it was at the first received, and had
 been all along preserved, and maintained in the
 Churches of God, as I alleged before. But, for
 a further discovery and declaration of *Origen*’s
 sense concerning the rule of Religion ; having
 examined all his citations from this Father, I shall
 now refer the Catechist to some other passages,
 in the same celebrated writer, which merit his
 grave attention.

In his usual strain of allegory, *Origen* saith ;
 (i) “ All the divinely-inspired *Scripture*, is the
 “ temple of the glory of God ; and the sense
 “ contained in it, the gold. We ought therefore
 “ in

(i) — *Ut sit quidem templum gloriæ Dei omnis Scriptura
 divinitus inspirata, aurum autem positus sensus in ea. Debe-
 mus ergo ad testimonium omnium verborum quæ proferimus in
 doctrina, proferre sensum Scripturæ, &c. In Math. 23.
 Tract. 25. Vol. 2. p. 141.*

“ in confirmation of every word we say in the
 “ way of doctrine, to produce the sense of Scrip-
 “ ture, &c.”—Again, (k) “ No one ought
 “ to make use of any books besides the canoni-
 “ cal Scriptures, to confirm his opinions.”—
 Again: speaking of those, who err in opinion,
 he saith, (l) “ they do not think according to
 “ the most true rule of the Scriptures.” And
 once more: (m) “ The eternal light discovered
 “ itself to the world two ways, namely by the
 “ Scripture, and by the creature. For, divine
 “ knowledge is no otherwise imparted to us than
 “ by the contents of the divine Scripture, and
 “ by the forms of the Creature.”—So much
 for father *Origen*.

Yet before I quite dismiss him, as I have
 given the Reader a taste of *Origen*’s allegorical
 way of expounding the Scriptures; I would
 take this opportunity to remark, that, when the
 Fathers speak of the *depth* and *obscurity* of the
 Scripture: it is with an eye to its *mystical* and al-
 legorical sense. Indeed, so obscure in *this* re-
 spect they sometimes represent the Scriptures, that
 he must be a *cunning* man, to use St. *Cyril*’s
 phrase, (n) who would find out their meaning.

H 2

This

(k) *Nemo uti debet, ad confirmationem dogmatum, libris
 qui sunt extra Canonizatas Scripturas. Ibid. pag. 148.
 Tract. 26.*

(l) *Multo autem pejus arbitror in dogmatibus aberrare,
 et non secundum verissimam regulam Scripturarum sentire.
 Ibid. pag. 152.*

(m) *Dupliciter ergo lux æterna seipsam mundo declarat,
 per Scripturam videlicet, et Creaturam. Non enim aliter
 in nobis divina cognitio renovatur, nisi per divinæ Scrip-
 turæ apices, et Creaturæ species. Homil. in Johan. Cap. 1.
 Vol. 2. p. 294, 295.*

(n) *Σοφοὶ καὶ ἀγνοῦν νομικῶν τε καὶ προφητικῶν συγγραμ-
 μάτων εἶναι ἐπισήμους. Cyril. Alex. Glaphyr. lib. 1. p. 143.
 Antv.*

This notion of the Scriptures they are supposed as hath been shown before, to have learned from *Philo*. (o) I must therefore desire the Reader to observe, that the opinion, which those good men entertained, concerning the darkness and obscurity of the Scriptures, was very different from what the *Romanists* pretend. For, even *Origen* himself declareth, that all things necessary to salvation are clearly revealed in the Scripture, according to the letter. (p) And this is what his master *Clemens Alexandrinus* calls the *common faith*, (q) which he supposeth the Apostle to mean by *the foundation*, in contradistinction from the abstruser speculations. But this by the way.

St. Cyprian.

A. D. This is an author, whom none but 248. a person of the Catechist's peculiar sagacity, or modesty, would ever have alleged, in favour of unwritten tradition, after some of his own friends had given him up, as none of theirs. (r) I shall therefore listen with a particular attention and curiosity, to any thing that can be produced from *St. Cyprian*, in this celebrated question. Well!

“ St.

(o) Καὶ γὰρ λόγον καὶ ἀκοὴν ὑπερβάλλει, μέζω, καὶ σεμνότερα ὄντα, ἢ ὡς θνητοῦ τινὸς ἐργάτῳ ἐναρμοδιῶμαι. *Philo. Jud. Op. p. 1. Edit. Paris.*

(p) *Literam autem Evangelii qui sequuntur, id est simplicem narrationem ipsius, salvantur; quoniam et ipsa sola Evangelii narratio simplex sufficit simplicioribus ad salutem. In Math. Tract. 26. p. 147. Conf. de Principiis. Vol. 1. p. 763.*

(q) Αὐτίκα ὁ Ἀπόστολος πρὸς ἀντιδιαβολὴν γνωστῆς τελειότητος τὴν κοινὴν πίσιν, πᾷ μὲν θεμέλιον λέγει. *Strom. 5. p. 557.*

(r) See *Tillotson's Rule of Faith. Part 4. Sect. 2.*

“ St. Cyprian saith:” (s) [that is with an eye to heresies, which owe their rise to an ignorance of the Scriptures, as Mr. Marshall there pertinently observeth in the margin, giving the contents of the following section] “ All this mischief hath
 “ its rise from hence, that we will not trace the
 “ truth of things to their original, [or will not
 “ go to the *original of truth*, (t)] nor look back
 “ to their *fountain-head*, nor observe the doctrine of our heavenly master. If we would
 “ consider these things, and weigh them, as we
 “ ought, there would be no great need of
 “ having recourse to argument, or long debates;
 “ for in *matters of faith* the way to come at the
 “ truth of them is very *short and compendious*, and
 “ fact at last is instead of all other proof.” —
 Which passage, instead of making for the Catechist, is directly against him. For, by the *original and fountain head of truth*, St. Cyprian understood the doctrine of our heavenly master, as laid down in the Scriptures. In proof of this assertion, I urge the following words of St. Cyprian, in that very epistle, (v) where he so strenuously asserteth

(s) *De Unitat. Eccles. p. 163. Edit. Basil.*

(t) *Ad veritatis originem.*

(v) *In compendio est autem apud religiosas mentes et simplices, et errorem deponere, et invenire atque eruere veritatem. Nam si ad divinæ traditionis caput, et originem revertamur, cessat error humanus et sacramentorum caelestium ratione perspecta, quicquid sub caligine ac nube tenebrarum obscurum latebat, luce veritatis aperitur. Si canalis aquæ, qui copiose prius et largiter profluebat, subito deficiat, nonne ad fontem pergitur, ut illic defectionis ratio noscatur? &c. — Quod et nunc facere oportet Dei sacerdotes præcepta divina servantibus, ut in aliquo si nutaverit, et vacillaverit veritas, ad originem Dominicam et Evangelicam et Apostolicam traditionem revertamur, ut inde surgat actus nostri ratio,*

asserteth the authority of Scripture, in opposition to unwritten tradition. “ They, who simply and honestly mean the truth, and would rid themselves of error, have a *short and easy way* to both these ends. For, if we will apply ourselves to the *fountain head of divine tradition*, all human errors will presently disappear; and when we once discern from thence the method and oeconomy of God’s holy sacraments; all clouds and darkness will vanish, and the light of truth will break out from under them. Should a pipe, through which water was used to be carried in great abundance, be stopped on a sudden; would you not go to the *spring*, which furnished it? &c. — Thus should the bishops of God behave upon the present occasion, if we would keep his commandments; *i. e.* in any case, where the truth is shocked or disputed, we should resort to our *fountain-head*, to the *Gospel* of our *Lord*, and the *tradition of his Apostles*; and thence our conduct should take its rise, from whence our religion, and all its ordinances took theirs. Now, THIS TRADITION tells us, that there is one *God*, and one *Christ*; one *hope*, and one *faith*; and one *Church*, [or *body*] and one *baptism*: &c.” manifestly referring, not to unwritten tradition, but to the Scripture itself. (w)

“ And again, (saith the Catechist) (x) We give you to understand, that we will not depart
“ from

tio, unde et ordo et origo surrexit. Traditum est nobis quod sit unus Deus, et Christus unus, et una spes, et fides una, et una Ecclesia, et baptisma unum, &c. S. Cypr. Ep. 73. ad Pompei. contra Ep. Stephani. p. 329.

(w) Ephes. iv. 4, — 6.

(x) S. Cypr. Ep. ad Pompon p. 37.

“ from Evangelical and Apostolical traditions,
 “ and therefore are for having ecclesiastical discipline to be preserved by all manner of ways,
 “ that may tend to the interest of our Christian
 “ brethren.” — Now, by Evangelical and Apostolical traditions, St. *Cyprian* only meant the traditions, or instructions, transmitted down to us, in the holy Scriptures, as may be justly inferred both from the manner of his expression, and from what hath been remarked before. But it will yet appear with a further degree of evidence, by what we shall have occasion to observe under the next Article, to which I now proceed.

Stephen Bishop of Rome.

Stephen bishop of Rome saith: (y) “ Let A. D.
 “ no innovation be made in the cus- 253.
 “ tom handed down to us by traditi-
 “ on.” — For this the Catechist unfortunately referreth us again to St. *Cyprian*. Oh! unhappy man; what had befallen him? what fascination was he under? why did he not cross himself all over? or try all the force of exorcism, to cast the evil spirit of Protestantism out of the writings of St. *Cyprian*, when he boldly ventured to look this Father in the face, and point his reader to a passage, which must end in his own confusion? For I do aver, no writer antient or modern ever exploded unwritten tradition, or insisted upon *the Scriptures*, as *the* rule of religion in opposition to it, with greater spirit or plainness, than St. *Cyprian* hath done,
 in

(y) *S. Cyprian. Ep. 73. p. 327.*

in that very epistle, from whence the forementioned words of *Pope Stephen*, are cited by the Catechist. For, in answer thereunto *St. Cyprian* saith thus. (z) “ Whence is that tradition? “ do we derive it from the immediate authority of our Lord himself in the Gospel? Or “ cometh it down to us from the directions of “ the Apostles in any of their Epistles? For, “ God hath most plainly given us to understand, “ that his *written* will is to be followed, where “ we find him thus directing *Joshua*, and saying, “ This book of the law shall not depart out of “ thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein “ day and night, that thou mayest observe to “ do all which is *written* therein. Our Lord “ also, when he sent forth his Apostles, ordered, that the nations should be baptized, and “ taught to observe all things which *he had* “ *commanded them*. If then there be any where “ extant, either in the Gospel itself, or in the “ Epistles, or acts of the Apostles, an express “ direction, that heretics should not be baptized “ —let such an holy and heavenly *tradition* be, “ by all means observed.”—After all it doth not appear that *Stephen* himself, as weak a man, and

(z) Nihil innovetur, inquit, nisi quod traditum est : Unde est ista traditio, utrumne de Dominica et Evangelica auctoritate descendens, an de Apostolorum mandatis atque epistolis veniens? Ea enim facienda esse quæ scripta sunt, Deus testatur et proponit ad Jesum Nave, dicens : Non recedet liber legis hujus ex ore tuo, sed meditaberis in eo die ac nocte, ut observes facere omnia quæ scripta sunt. Item Dominus Apostolos suos mittens, mandat baptizari gentes et doceri ut observent omnia quæcunque ille præcepit. Si ergo aut in Evangelio præcipitur, aut Apostolorum epistolis aut actibus continetur, ut a quacunque heresi venientes non baptizentur, — observetur etiam et hæc sancta traditio. S. Cyprian. ibid.

and as great a simpleton, as St. *Cyprian* represents *his holiness*, was for holding unscriptural traditions. For St. *Cyprian* appealeth to the Scripture, as a common rule and standard, acknowledged on both sides, and by which he was ready to stand or fall, and *Vincent of Lerius*, (a) who as cited by the Catechist, quotes the words of *Stephen* with approbation, declares, in the same work, that, (b) “The rule of scripture is perfect, and abundantly sufficient of itself for all things.” However, we cannot but observe by the way, how little deference was paid in St. *Cyprian*’s days, to the *Pope of Rome*. (c)

The Fathers in the Council of Nice.

“The Council of Nice (as the Cate- A. D.
chist proceeds) the first general Coun- 325.
cil, held by the Christian Church, has
these words: Let the antient customs prevail.”
—— But he is not so good as to inform us,
what these antient customs were, whether scrip-
tural, or unscriptural customs, that the Rea-
der may be able to judge of the pertinency of
this citation to the matter in hand. The words
are in the sixth Canon, which beginneth thus:
(d) “Let the antient customs prevail, which
I “are

(a) *Commonitor. Cap. 29. p. 23, 24.*

(b) *Canon Scripturarum perfectus est, sibi que ad omnia satis superque sufficit. Vinc. Lirin. ibid. Cap. 2, & 41. See Dr. Cofin’s Canon. Script. p. 1.*

(c) For which reason this Epistle of St. *Cyprian*, with some others, was wisely left out in the Roman Edition. *James’s Corruption of the Fathers. p. 153, 154.*

(d) Τα ἀρχαῖα ἔδη κρατεῖτω τὰ ἐν Αἰγύπτῳ, καὶ Διβύη καὶ Πενταπόλει, ὥς τὸν ἐν Αλεξανδρείᾳ ἐπίσκοπον πάντων τούτων ἔχειν τὴν ἐξουσίαν, &c. *Can. 6. Concil. Nicen.*

“ are in *Egypt*, and *Libya*, and *Pentapolis*, that
 “ the bishop in *Alexandria*, have authority over
 “ all these, &c.” — So that the antient customs mentioned in the Canon respect the powers or priviledges of *Metropolitans*, as Bishop *Beverege* hath observed. (e) But, it doth not appear that the said customs, however antient, were derived from Apostolical tradition, which is the point in question, but rather the contrary. For, if custom by degrees obtains the force of a law, yet it was not originally founded in a law. Thus, laws and customs are, properly speaking, different things. It may be therefore inferred from the very form of the Canon, that the antient customs specified in it, were not derived from Apostolical tradition ; because such a derivation would have made them proper, divine laws, without the sanction of any Council. Besides the Council never urged Apostolical tradition to enforce the observance of them. In respect to the origin of *Primates*, or *Metropolitans*, I assent to the learned Mr. *Bingham*’s opinion, which he modestly proposeth by way of conjecture. (f)
 “ Perhaps (saith he after having mentioned
 “ the various and uncertain opinions of other
 “ writers concerning the origin of this settlement) it took its rise from that common respect and deferrence, which was usually paid
 “ by the rest of the Bishops to the Bishop of the
 “ civil *Metropolis* in every province ; (g) which
 “ advan-

(e) Privilegia autem hoc Niceno canone ecclesiis quibusdam asserta Metropolitica erant ; &c. Bevereg. Cod. Can. Vindic. lib. 2. Cap. 5. Sect. 2.

(f) Orig. Eccles. book 2. chap. 16. Sect. 2.

(g) Of conforming the external Jurisdiction of the Christian Church to the civil Government of the Roman Empire ;
 see

“ advancing into a *custom*, was afterwards made
 “ into a Canon by the Council of *Nice*.” Re-
 ferring to the Canon before us.

Constantine the great.

The next Christian Father, cited A. D.
 before the bar of this controversie, is 330.
 a great man, no less a person than
 Father, alias emperor, *Constantine the great*. “ *The*
 “ *emperor, Constantine the great*, (saith our Cate-
 “ *chist*) *writing to Eusebius of Casaria, upon his*
 “ *refusing to be translated to the see of Antioch, has these*
 “ *words*: I have read your letter often, and find
 “ that you are most exact in observing the rule of
 “ ecclesiastical discipline: for, to persist in those
 “ things, which are acceptable to God, and
 “ agreeable to Apostolick tradition, is an high
 “ degree of piety.”—But, a person of such high
 rank and quality deserveth a little more respect,
 than the Catechist seemeth to have shewn him,
 in his way of translating and representing the
 words of this imperial Father. In the original
 they run thus, (h) “ I have read your letter
 “ often, and taken notice, that the rule of ec-
 “ clesiastical *knowledge* hath been exactly observed.
 “ Indeed to persist in those things, which ap-

I 2

pear

see *Cave's Primitive Christianity*, Part 1. Chap. 8. Both
Province and *Diocese* are originally Civil terms. Ex provin-
 cia mea Ciliciensi, cui suis τρεῖς διοικήσεις Asiaticas attributas
 fuisse, &c. *M. T. Cicer. Ep. lib. 13. 67.*

(h) Ανέγνων πληρέστατα τὴν ἐπιστολὴν, καὶ τὸν κανόνα τῆς
 ἐκκλησιαστικῆς ἐπισήμης εἰς ἀκρίβειαν φυλαχθέντα κατενόησα.
 Ἐμμένει γοῦν τοῦτοις ἅπερ ἀρεσά τε τῷ θεῷ, καὶ τῇ ἀποστολικῇ
 παραδόσει σύμφωνα φαίνεται, ἐναγέας. *Euseb. de Vita Constant.*
lib. 3. cap. 61.

“ *pear* to be pleasing to God, and agreeable to
 “ apostolical tradition, is an high degree of pie-
 “ ty:”—Before I proceed to offer any remarks
 upon this passage; I take the liberty to observe
 that, in his excellent advice to the *Nicene* Fathers
 in council assembled, this first Christian emperor
 fully declared his sentiments concerning the pro-
 per rule of religion. Having represented to that
 venerable Assembly, how unhappy it would be,
 if after their enemies were intirely subdued they
 should make themselves a laughing-stock by
 quarreling one with another, particularly about
 matters of religion, when they had in their hands
 the *written words of the holy spirit*; he thus goeth
 on: (i) “ For the evangelical and Apostolical
 “ books and the oracles of the antient Prophets
 “ plainly instruct us, what, or how, we ought to
 “ think of God. Therefore, laying aside hos-
 “ tile contention, let us resolve all questions by
 “ the *divinely-inspired Scriptures*.” — And now,
 having seen what was the opinion of *Constantine*
the great concerning the rule of religion; it will
 not be difficult to understand what he meant in
 the forementioned passage by the rule, or *Ca-*
non (k) of *ecclesiastical knowledge, and Apostolical tra-*
dition.

(i) Ἐυαγγελικαὶ γάρ εἰσι βίβλοι, καὶ ἀποστολικά, καὶ τῶν
 παλαιῶν προφητῶν τὰ δέσποισματα, σαφῶς ἡμᾶς ἃ χρὴ περὶ
 τοῦ Θεοῦ φρονεῖν ἐκπαιδεύουσι. Τὴν πολεμοποιὸν δὴν ἀπαλά-
 σαντες ἔριν, ἐκ τῶν θεοπνεύστων λόγων λάβωμεν τῶν ζητου-
 μένων τὴν λύσιν. *Theodorit. Hist. Eccles. lib. 1. cap. 7.*
Edit. Vales.

(k) “ The word *Canon* is originally Greek, and in the
 “ ordinary acceptation signifies a *Rule*; and therefore when
 “ made use of in Divinity, we understand by the *Canon* and
 “ *Canonical Books*, those Books, which were designed by
 “ God to be the *Rule* of our Faith and Practice.” *Richardson's Can. of the N. T. vindic. p. 6.*

dition. For, his plain intention was, to commend *Eusebius* for having acted, not according to maxims of worldly policy, but to the dictates of religious wisdom, and for persisting in what *to him appeared* to be the most agreeable, not to his secular interest, but to the will and word of God. Not one syllable here of any particular rule of ecclesiastical *discipline*! a word which the Catechist borrowed from the translator. On the contrary I observe :

1. If there was any such rule in being at that time, to which *Eusebius* had conformed, in refusing to be translated to the metropolitant, or patriarchal see of *Antioch*; there would seem to have been little room left for him *to judge* in the case, what *was agreeable* to the will of God : unless he doubted of the justness of the rule, which by the way was not over-orthodox.

2. If there was then any ecclesiastical canon against the translation of Bishops, how came the people of *Antioch* to take a step so contrary to it, as to desire *Eusebius* to be translated thither from *Cæsarea*? And why did not *Constantine* himself expressly urge that ecclesiastical rule of discipline, as a reason to dissuade them from the attempt, in the letter which he wrote upon the occasion to the people of *Antioch*. (l)

3. The translation of *Eusebius* was approved by a synod of Bishops convened at *Antioch*; to whom as *Eusebius* also informs us, *Constantine* wrote another letter, in order to divert them from their purpose. (m) From whence it followeth, that there can be no reference here to the 14th. canon of the Apostles, as some writers have contended

(l) *De Vit. Constant. lib. 3. cap. 60.*

(m) *Ibid. cap. 62.*

tended in favour of their antiquity. (n) Because the said canon doth not absolutely prohibit the translation of Bishops, but expressly alloweth it, when approved by a number of Bishops; (o) which was the case here. Therefore since *Eusebius* had the consent of the Bishops for his translation to *Antioch*, he would not have contravened the canon, had he concurred in the thing. Consequently, his declining the motion, on the other hand could not be properly considered, and much less applauded, as any instance of conforming himself to it.

After all; suppose the words of *Constantine* under consideration have respect to some positive ecclesiastical constitution forbidding the translation of Bishops: still it remaineth to be proved, that the said constitution was founded upon unwritten tradition, without any foundation in the Scriptures. But, that the rule, by which *Eusebius* acted to his just commendation; whatever it might be, was a rule conformable to Scripture, is evident from another passage in the same letter of *Constantine* to *Eusebius*, (p) where that emperor praiseth him for determining to keep the commands of God, the Apostolical and Ecclesiastical rule. And thus, the ecclesiastical rule, was the same as the Apostolical rule, and both the same with the commands of God; whether the words of *Constantine* refer to an Apostolical

(n) *Vid. Bp. Beverege Codex Can. Vindic. lib. 1. cap. 13 Sect. 3.*

(o) Κρίσει πολλῶν ἐπισκόπων. *Can. Apost. 14.*

(p) — Τὰς τε ἐντολὰς τοῦ Θεοῦ, καὶ τὸν ἀποστολικὸν κανόνα καὶ τῆς ἐκκλησίας φυλάττειν ἔγνωκεν. *Euseb. Vit. Const. lib. 3. cap. 61.*

telical canon, or a *Nicene* canon, (q) or to no such positive constitution at all.

Eusebius.

“ *And Eusebius himself writes thus a- A. D.*
 “ *gainst Marcellus.* (r) But why 315.
 “ do you not keep what you have
 “ received from the ecclesiastical fathers and
 “ doctors? — From whence therefore had you
 “ these things? What teacher had you of them?
 “ What synod? What writing of ecclesiastical
 “ men?” — But all that can be fairly made of
 these warm expostulations with *Marcellus*, is no
 more than *this*, viz. that *Eusebius* blamed him
 for departing from the commonly received doc-
 trine of the Christian Church, as founded upon
 the Scripture. This is what *Eusebius*, and all
 the other antient Fathers constantly laid to the
 Charge of the heretics, that they did not adhere
 to the true and genuine doctrine of the *holy*
scriptures. I will here produce a pregnant in-
 stance from *Eusebius himself*, who relateth con-
 cerning the followers of *Artemon*, that (s) “ They
 “ boldly depraved the *sacred writings*, but re-
 “ jected the rule of the antient faith. And
 “ they were ignorant of Christ, not examining
 “ what the *divine Scriptures* say, &c. — So that
 the rule of the antient faith, which, *Eusebius*
 faith,

(q) *Vid. Concil. Nicen. Canon 15.*

(r) *Euseb. contra Marcell. lib. 2. cap. 4.*

(s) Γραφάς μὲν θείας ἀνόβως βεβαδιουργήκασι. Πίστως
 δὲ ἀρχαίας κανόνα ἠδετήκασι. Χριστὸν δὲ ἠγνοήκασαν, οὐ τί
 αἱ θεαὶ λέγουσι γραφαὶ ζητοῦντες. *Euseb. Hist. Eccles.*
lib. 5. cap. 28.

faith, these heretics rejected, was either the Scripture itself; or, (which is the same thing in effect and in point of argument with our Catechist) such a summary of the Christian doctrine as was collected from the Scripture. Now, did not the Catechist know (then I must inform him) that *Marcellus* aforesaid embraced the opinion of *Paulus Samosatensis*, (t) who revived the error of *Artemon*, (v) affirming Christ to be a mere man? A notion, which I presume the Catechist will not deny to be contrary to the doctrine of scripture, at least in the opinion of the orthodox Fathers. This doctrine then is the ecclesiastical doctrine, and the rule of the antient faith, from which *Marcellus*, and others departed depraving the holy scriptures. (w)

Athanasius.

A. D. “ St. *Athanasius* exhorts persons, to
330. “ continue upon the foundation of
“ the Apostles, and to retain the tra-
ditions of the Apostles.” (x) — Most excellent advice! I wish to God, the Catechist and his friends would take and follow it. Because the traditions of the Apostles are, according to the great *Athanasius*, the doctrines of the Apostles as delivered in their writings; if we will permit him to be his own interpreter, which is but a
rea-

(t) Ψίλον γὰρ ἄνθρωπον, ὡς ὁ Σαμοσατεὺς ἐτόλμησεν [*sc. Marcellus*] ἐπέμν τὸν Χριστόν. *Socrat. Hist. Eccles. lib. 1. cap. 36. Conf. Zonar. Concil. Constantinop. Can. 1.*

(v) — Κατὰ τῆς Ἀρτέμωνος αἵρέσεως — ἦν αὐδὲς ὁ ἐκ Σαμοσάτων Παῦλος κατ’ ἡμᾶς ἀναγνώσασθαι πεπεράται. *Euseb. ibid.*

(w) *Vid. Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. 7. cap. 27, & 30.*

(x) *De Synod. Arimin. & Seleuc. tom. 1. p. 929. Edit. Paris.*

reasonable demand. For, upon another occasion he expresseth himself thus; (y)“ But, ours
 “ is the right faith, and derived from the doctrine of the Apostles, and from the tradition
 “ of the fathers confirmed out of the *New*, and
 “ the *Old Testament*.” Again, (z) “ The tradition of the Apostles teacheth, *Peter* saying,
 “ that *Christ* suffered for us in the flesh; and *Paul*
 “ writing, *Looking for the blessed hope, &c.*”——

Thus, good Catechist, what *Peter* hath said in one Epistle, (a) and what *Paul* hath written in another, (a) is by *Albanasius* called the tradition of the Apostles. I cannot therefore but repeat my earnest wishes, that you would follow his good advice, viz. to continue upon the foundation of the Apostles, and to retain the traditions of the Apostles; for then we should hear no more of extra-scriptural traditions, from that quarter.

What hath been already remarked, is a sufficient key to the other citations from *Albanasius*, plainly discovering their impertinency to the design for which they are alleged by the Catechist.
 “ And in another place he saith, (b) But, if the
 “ Arians confess, that they first heard these
 “ things, let them not deny, that this heresy
 “ is new, and not derived from the fathers.
 “ Now, what is that which is not derived from

K

“ the

(y) *Ep. ad Adelph. contra Arian. tom. 1. p. 159.* Ἡμῶν δὲ ἡ πίστις ἐστὶν ἡ ὀρθή, καὶ ἐκ διδασκαλίας Ἀποστόλων ὁρμαιμένη, καὶ παραδόσεως τῶν πατέρων βεβαιουμένη ἐκ τε νέας καὶ παλαιᾶς Διαθήκης.

(z) Ἡ δὲ Ἀποστόλων παράδοσις διδάσκει τοῦ μὲν Πέτρου λέγοντος, Χριστοῦ αὖν ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν παθόντος σαρκί, τοῦ δὲ Παύλου γράφοντος, προσδεχόμενοι τὴν μακαρίαν ἐλπίδα. *Ep. ad Adelph. ibid.*

(a) 1 Pet. iv. 1. Titus ii. 13.

(b) *Contra Arian. Orat. 2. Tom. 1. p. 314.*

“ the fathers, but is lately invented? &c.” — What an egregious trifler is the Catechist, in producing this passage to support the authority of tradition! as if *Albanasius* did not suppose (whatever the Catechist doth) (c) that the doctrine of the Arians was contrary to the doctrine of Scripture. — “ *And elsewhere he bath these words:* “ (d) For, the true doctrine is such as the fathers “ have delivered it, &c.” — Yes, confirmed out of the New, and Old Testament, as *Albanasius* saith in the passage cited before. The same *Albanasius* will tell the Catechist, (e) “ All the divine “ scripture is a teacher of virtue and of true “ faith.” And if this be not enough to satisfy him, I hope the next passage from *Albanasius* will quite please him. (f) “ For verily the holy “ and divinely-inspired Scriptures, are of themselves sufficient for the declaration, or discovery, of the truth.” Pass we on then to the next father, under this good omen.

St. Basil.

A. D. 370. “ *St. Basil says:* (g) As to the objection against the doxology, that “ the words *with the spirit*, are not “ found

(c) The Apostolical Constitutions, of which the Catechist hath such a favourable opinion, were censured, and rejected for a certain heresy, by *Synod 6. in Trullo. Can. 2.*

(d) *De Decret. Synod. Nicen. Tom. 1. p. 252.*

(e) Πᾶσα μὲν ἡ θεῖα γραφή διδάσκαλος ἐστὶν ἀρετῆς καὶ πίστεως ἀληθοῦς. *Ep. ad Marcellin. Tom. 1. p. 968.*

(f) Αὐτάρκεις μὲν γὰρ εἰσὶν αἱ ἁγίας καὶ θεοπνεύστοι γραφαὶ πρὸς τὴν τῆς ἀληθείας ἀπαγγελίαν. *Orat. contra Gent. Tom. 1. p. 1.*

(g) *Basil de Spirit. Sanct. cap. 29. tom. 2. p. 357. Edit. Paris.*

“ found in the scriptures, I answer, that if we
 “ receive nothing else unwritten, then also let
 “ this be rejected: but, if we observe many
 “ other unwritten practices, then let us receive
 “ this among the rest. I look upon it as aposto-
 “ lical, to adhere firmly even to unwritten tra-
 “ ditions. For, saith he, *I commend you, bre-*
 “ *thren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep*
 “ *the traditions, as I delivered unto you:* and
 “ again, *Hold the traditions, which you have receiv-*
 “ *ed, whether by word or our epistle:* of which tra-
 “ ditions this is certainly one.” And again: (h)
 “ Of the doctrines, that have been preserved,
 “ and preached in the Church, some we have in
 “ writing, and others we have received from A-
 “ postolical tradition, derived down to us pri-
 “ vately [or without a publick writing:] and
 “ both these are of equal force, and persuasion
 “ to godliness, and are gainsaid by no body.

So then! to comfort his aching heart after so many fruitless efforts and sad disappointments, the Catechist, with great labour and travail, hath brought forth something, at last, which looketh a little plausible on his side, (though from a writer below the middle of the fourth Century.) Behold St. *Basil* the great, pleading for unwritten traditions! The book here cited is *that*, wherein all the fond advocates for tradition glory and triumph. One of the most moderate of them saith: (i) “ The book of the holy Spi-
 “ rit to *Amphilochius* is that treatise of all the
 K 2 “ works

Paris. N. B. The nature of this objection clearly shews that in *S. Basil's* days the Scripture was considered as the proper rule of religion.

(h) *S. Basil. ibid. cap. 27.*

(i) *Dupin Eccles. Hist. c. nt. 4. p. 145.*

“ works of *Basil*, which most of all displeaseth
 “ the Protestants; because it contains such things
 “ as do not favour them. *Erasmus*, who took
 “ great liberty to condemn every thing, that
 “ did not please him, made no scruple to reject
 “ this. — The greatest part of protestant cri-
 “ tics, being dissatisfied with that necessity of
 “ tradition, which this book evidently proves,
 “ have gladly received this opinion of *Erasmus*,
 “ &c.” So far the Sorbon Doctor. — But, with-
 out entering at present into the question, con-
 cerning the genuineness of the book; I shall re-
 commend to the Catechist, and his catholic bre-
 thren another passage in the same book, the
 sense whereof I shall give in the words of Abp.
Tillotson. (k) “ *Basil*, maintaining the doxology
 “ as it was used in his days, says, *Thus we receiv-*
 “ *ed from our fathers*; but adds immediately, (l)
 “ *This* is not enough for us, that it is the tradi-
 “ tion of the fathers: for they [also] followed
 “ the authority of scripture, making its testimo-
 “ nies the principles upon which they built.” —
 To this the Catechist will allow me to add ano-
 ther passage from St. *Basil*, not unworthy of his
 notice and regard. (m) “ Every word and
 “ thing, or every doctrine and practice, ought
 “ to be confirmed by the testimony of the di-
 “ vinely-inspired Scripture, to establish the good,
 “ and

(k) *Rule of Faith. Part 4. Sect. 2.*

(l) — Ἀλλ' οὐ τοῦτο ἡμῖν ἱκανεῖ, ὅτι, τῶν πατέρων ἡ πα-
 ράδοσις. Κάκεινοι γὰρ τῷ βουλήματι τῆς γραφῆς ἠκολούθη-
 σαν, ἐκ τῶν μαρτυρίων, ὡς μικρῷ πρόδεν ὑμῖν παρεδίμεδα,
 τὰς ἀρχὰς λαβόντες. *Basil. ibid. cap. 7.*

(m) Ὅτι δὲ πᾶν ῥῆμα, ἢ πρᾶγμα, πιστοῦνται τῇ μαρτυρίᾳ
 τῆς θεοπνεύτου γραφῆς εἰς πληροφορίαν μὲν τῶν ἀγαθῶν, ἐντρο-
 πὴν δὲ τῶν πονηρῶν. *Basil. Moral. sum. sen. Defin. 26.*
cap. 1.

“ and confound the bad.” — Well! what shall we do now? We see St. *Basil*, yea St. *Basil*, one while insisting upon the validity of unwritten tradition, at another time disavowing it, and maintaining the insufficiency of tradition, unless it be founded on the Scriptures, and supported thereby. Doth St. *Basil* then contradict himself? If so, his evidence and authority will stand for nothing. The Catechist therefore, and his whole fraternity, must either give up their champion, St. *Basil*, or else invent some rational method to make him consistent with himself. But, I will be so officious as to save them the trouble, and, to oblige them for once, try what I can do to reconcile St. *Basil*, with St. *Basil*, and thereby clear him from the charge of inconsistency and self contradiction. To this end it will be requisite, to examine his words a little more accurately, than the Catechist hath given their sense, in the two citations he hath made from St. *Basil*.

In the first passage he saith, (n) “ If we receive nothing else unwritten, then also let this be rejected; but if many *mystical things*, without writing are practised amongst us, then among the rest let us receive this also.” In the other passage, he expresseth himself thus: (o) “ Of the doctrines which have been preserved, and preached in the church, some we have
“ by

(n) Εἰ μὲν μηδὲν ἕτερον ἀγραφον, μηδὲ τοῦτο παραδεχθῆ-
ται. Εἰ δὲ τὰ πλεῖστα τῶν μυσικῶν ἀγράφως ἡμῖν ἐμπολιτεύε-
ται, μετὰ πολλῶν ἑτέρων καὶ τοῦτο καταδεξάμεθα, Ἦς. *Ba-
sil. de Spirit. Sanct. cap. 29.*

(o) Τῶν ἐν τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ πεφυλαγμένων δογμάτων καὶ κη-
ρυγμάτων, τὰ μὲν ἐκ τῆς ἐγγράφου διδασκαλίας ἔχομεν, τὰ
δὲ ἐκ τῶν Ἀποστόλων παραδόσεως διαδοθέντα ἡμῖν ἐν μυστη-
ρίῳ, παρεδεξάμεθα, Ἦς. *Ibid. cap. 27.*

“ by written instruction, but others we have received as they were derived to us by the tradition of the Apostles in a *mystery*.” — Now, the question here to be resolved is *this*; “ What sort of *mystery* and *mystic things* doth St. Basil mean?” To which I answer, (according to a just and useful distinction, noted before from the learned *Suicer*, between written and unwritten tradition. I say, according to this distinction) the mysteries, or mystic things, of which St. Basil speaks, were, as he supposed, things virtually contained in the sense, though not literally expressed in the words of Scripture. This discovereth the peculiar emphasis and propriety of his expression, when speaking of unwritten tradition as a tradition derived from the fathers, he saith; they followed *the Mind*, or *meaning* of the Scripture. (p) Abp. Tillotson, as I have given his words before, rendereth it; *they followed the authority of the Scripture*: which amounteth to the same thing. It is a remark of *Origen's*, who therein expresseth the general sense of the fathers; that, (q) “ The Scriptures were written “ by the holy Spirit, and that they have not “ only that sense, which is manifest to all, but “ a certain other sense, which is hidden from “ many. For, *those things, which are written,* “ are the forms of some sacraments or mysteries “ and the images of divine things.” — Thus, the

(p) Τῷ βουλήματι τῆς γραφῆς ὑπολούθησαν.

(q) Tum demum quod per Spiritum Sanctum Scripturae conscriptae sint, et sensum habeant non eum solum, qui in manifesto est, sed et alium quendam latentem quamplurimos. Formae enim hae quae scriptae sunt sacramentorum quorundam, et divinarum rerum imagines sunt. *Orig. de Princip.* Vol. 1. p. 764

the things, that are *written*, were supposed to contain other things, which to distinguish them from the former, must be considered as *unwritten*. This observation at once illustrates and confirms the notion I have advanced concerning St. *Basil's* meaning in his words now under consideration. And, that what I have suggested, is the real truth of the matter, will be farther evident from what follows, in the place last cited from him; where he thus proceeds: (r) “ If the unwritten customs be rejected by us, as not being of any great moment, we shall imprudently bring great damage upon the Gospel, rather we shall reduce the preaching of it to a mere name.” — Therefore in St. *Basil's* opinion, the Gospel (by which, I suppose, the Catechist will allow, the Fathers understood the written Gospel, or the doctrine of the Gospel as written in the Scriptures) would be greatly injured by laying aside the unwritten customs. That is to say, it would thereby be deprived of something that properly belongs to it; like a person amerced in a fine, or condemned to lose his life. The manner of expression is very strong, (s) importing that the Scripture, or written Gospel, would be hurt in its *very vitals*, and receive a mortal wound. And thus, *the preaching of the Gospel*, as he saith, *would be reduced to a mere name*. In other words, the Scripture would become a dead letter, without life and spirit,

(r) Εἰ γὰρ ἐπιχειρήσαιμεν τὰ ἀγραφα τῶν ἐδῶν ὡς μὴ μεγάλῃ ἐχόντα τὴν δύναμιν παραιτέσθαι, λάθοιμεν ἂν εἰς αὐτὰ τὰ καίρια ζημιοῦντες τὸ εὐαγγέλιον, μᾶλλον δὲ εἰς ὄνομα φιλῶν περιέσσαντες τὸ κήρυγμα. *Basil. de spirit. Sanct. cap. 27.*

(s) Εἰς αὐτὰ τὰ καίρια ζημιοῦντες.

spirit, if deprived of the spiritual and mystic sense, and of those appendages in religion that were built upon it. For, according to the prevailing notion, the literal sense was the body, but the mystical sense, was the soul and spirit, of the Scriptures; (t) as all the allegorists will tell you. But, to proceed with St. *Basil*, and from the thread of his discourse take the right clue to his meaning. After he had given a particular detail of unwritten customs, and made some reflections upon the usefulness of confining these things to secret instruction, as tending to preserve the dignity of the mysteries; He intimateth, that there is so little apparent foundation for these things in the scripture to vulgar apprehension, that (v) “the uninitiated could not discern upon what ground this kind of discipline could triumph and glory, in the sacred writings,” (which, by the way, implieth that it did, however, glory in the Scriptures as its groundwork, although the reasonableness of its pretensions to scripture authority, was not obvious to all.) And then having laid down a distinction between those things which are *concealed in silence*, meaning the unwritten things aforesaid) and those which are made public, he hath these remarkable

(t) — Ut narratio quidem eorum secundum historiam simplicem sit corpus; Spiritalis autem sensus, et ipsa Scripturarum intima veritas, sit anima et spiritus, &c. *Origen in Math. cap. 23. Vol. 2. p. 146.* Ἀπασα γὰρ ἡ νομοθεσία δοκεῖ τοῖς ἀνδράσι τούτοις εἰκέναι ζῶν, καὶ σῶμα μὲν ἔχειν τὰς ῥητὰς διατάξεις, ψυχὴ δὲ τὸν ἐναποκείμενον ταῖς διαλέξεσιν ἀόρατον νοῦν; &c. *Pachymer. in S. Dionys. Areop. p. 66. tom. 2. Edit. Antwerp. ex Offic. Plantin.*

(v) — Ἄ δὲ οὐδὲ ὑποπτεῖν ἔχει τοῖς ἀμυήτοις τούτων πῶς ἂν ᾖ εἶδος τὴν διδασκαλίαν θριαμβεύειν ἐν γράμμασι, &c. *Basil. ibid.*

able words: (w) “ The *obscurity*, which the
 “ Scripture maketh use of, is a *kind of silence*,
 “ rendering the secret doctrines hard to be un-
 “ derstood.” For, (as *Balsamon* glosseth upon
 the words (x) “ what is spoken obscurely, so
 “ as not to be understood by many, seemeth to
 “ be concealed in silence.” Therefore by the
silence of Scripture, whereby the unwritten things
 were concealed, St. *Basil* understood only the
obscurity of Scripture; consequently he supposed
 that these things were contained in the Scripture,
 and there couched in some terms or other, such
 terms as were understood by those *that were let*
into the secret, though unintelligible to others.
 Accordingly thus he proceedeth: (y) “ For this
 “ cause all pray towards the east, [one of the
 “ unwritten customs, which he had mentioned
 “ before] but *few* understand the reason to be,
 “ that our antient country, the Paradise which
 “ God planted in Eden, is towards the east:
 “ and they pray standing on the first day of
 “ the week, but all of us do not know the
 “ ground of this practice. For, not only as be-
 “ ing risen with Christ, and obliged to seek those
 L “ things

(w) Σιωπῆς δὲ εἶδος, καὶ ἡ ἀσάφεια ἢ χρῆται ἡ γραφή.
Basil. ibid.

(x) Τὸ γὰρ ἀσαφὲς ἐρμηνεύον, ὥς μὴ καὶ παρὰ πολλῶν
 γινώσκειν, εἰκοι σιωπᾶσαι. *Balsam. in Canon. pag. 1032.*
Edit. Paris.

(y) Τοῦτου χάριν πάντες μὲν ὁρῶμεν κατὰ ἀνατολὰς ἐπὶ τῶν
 προσευχῶν, ὀλίγοι δὲ ἴσμεν ὅτι τὴν ἀρχαίαν πατρίδα τὸν
 παράδεισον ὃν ἐφύτευσεν ὁ Θεὸς ἐν Ἐδεμ κατὰ ἀνατολὰς. Καὶ
 ὁρδοὶ μὲν πληροῦσι τὰς εὐχὰς ἐν τῇ μιᾷ τοῦ σαββάτου, τὸν
 δὲ λόγον οὐ πάντες οἶδαμεν. Οὐ γὰρ μόνον ὡς συνανασάντες
 Χριστῷ, καὶ τὰ ἀνω ζητεῖν ὁφείλοντες ἐν τῇ ἀναστάσει ἡμέρᾳ τῆς
 δεδομένης, ἡμῖν χάριτος διὰ τῆς κατὰ τὴν προσευχὴν εὐσεβείας
 ἑαυτοὺς ἐπιμιμνήσκωμεν, ἀλλ' ὅτι δοκεῖ πῶς τοῦ προσδου-
 μένου αἰῶνος εἶναι ἐκείνη. *Basil. ibid.*

“ things which are above, do we remind ourselves
 “ of the grace given to us, by this posture in
 “ prayer on the resurrection-day: but because
 “ it seemeth to be a kind of image, or repre-
 “ sentation, of the world expected, or a future
 “ life.” — And thus, *St. Basil* hath suggested
 some *Scripture* grounds and reasons of these un-
 written customs; that is, of the mystic kind, not
 obvious to all, but understood by some persons.
 In conclusion of all, he further saith, (z) “ The
 “ time would fail me to recount (or explain) the
 “ unwritten mysteries of the church. I omit
 “ others: but from what writings have we the
 “ confession of faith itself, to believe in the
 “ Father and the Son, and the holy spirit? &c.”
 — Since then *St. Basil* considered, and urged,
 this form of confession, as one of the unwrit-
 ten customs, in defence of his unwritten doxo-
 logy; though, as his following words intimate,
 he thought that the one, as well as the other
 might be deduced, *as a consequence*, from the
 form of baptism, delivered in *Scripture*: nothing
 can be plainer, than that the unwritten myste-
 ries, which he speaks of, were, as he supposed,
 things contained in the *sense*, though not ex-
 pressed

(z) Ἐπιλήψαι με ἡ ἡμέρα, τὰ ἀγγραφα τῆς ἐκκλησίας μυσ-
 τήρια διηγούμενον. Ἐὖ τάλλα. αὐτὴν δὲ τὴν ὁμολογίαν τῆς
 πίσεως, πιστεῦεν εἰς πατέρα καὶ υἱόν, καὶ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, ἐκ ποίων
 συγγραμμάτων ἔχομεν; εἰ μὲν ἐκ τῆς τοῦ βαπτίσματος πα-
 ραδόσεως κατὰ τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας ἀκόλουθον βαπτίζομεθα, οὕτω
 καὶ πιστεῦεν οφείλοιας ὁμοίαν [τῷ βαπτισματι τὴν ὁμολογίαν]
 κατατιθέμεθα: συγχαρησάτωσαν ἡμῖν ἐκ τῆς αὐτῆς ἀκολουθίας
 ὁμοίαν τῇ πίσει τὴν δόξαν ἀποδιδόναι. Εἰ δὲ τὸν τρόπον τῆς
 δοξολογίας ὡς ἀγγραφῶν παραιτοῦνται, δότωσαν ἡμῖν τῆς τε
 κατὰ τὴν πίσιν ὁμολογίας, καὶ τῶν λοιπῶν ὧν ἀπαριθμησάμεθα
 ἐγγραφῶς τὰς ἀποδείξεις. *Basil. ibid.*

pressed or directly prescribed in the *letter*, of Scripture. Q. E. D.

And thus, from the words of *St. Basil*, in the very book, and chapter cited by the Catechist, I have pointed out the way, and the only way, to reconcile *St. Basil* with himself. For if, as hath, I think, been clearly shewn, *St. Basil* supposed, that the *mystic unwritten things*, he mentioneth, were grounded upon the sense of Scripture, without being literally expressed; then what he saith upon this head is perfectly consistent with what he had advanced before, *viz.* “ That the
“ Fathers in their tradition followed the authority of the Scripture, making its testimonies
“ the principles upon which they built.” The consequence of which is, that the Scripture was to the best of their knowledge, and *as they understood it*, their ground and rule in *all things whatsoever*. — And now, alas! for the poor Catechist! what will become of him? Methinks I hear him complain, “ *Atanasius* is not; *Eusebius* is not; &c. &c. and will they take *Basil* also? All these things are against me.” But it is a plain case: either *St. Basil*’s authority is good for nothing, as being inconsistent with himself; or, being reconciled to himself, his authority is against the Catechist. Because all the distinction that *St. Basil* can be consistently understood to make, between written and unwritten traditions, doctrines, or institutions, is only *this*, *viz.* that, according to him, the former were literally expressed in the words, the latter were mystically contained in the sense, of Scripture. The Scripture therefore was the real ground and foundation of both the one and the other, according to *St. Basil*. *Who hath ears to hear,*

bear, let him bear. — From henceforth let all *Protestants* keep their temper towards St. *Basil*: for I can assure them he is a very harmless, innocent, well-meaning man. Even that very book of St. *Basil's*; which *Dupin* hath represented as so great a scarecrow to the *Protestants*, appeareth now to be a very inoffensive thing. And if *Erasmus*, or any other learned and judicious critics, suspected the genuineness of this book, I imagine they must have had better grounds for their suspicion, than the supposition of its favouring *extra-scriptural tradition*, otherwise I cannot but think that they did it great injustice.

St. Cyril of Jerusalem.

A. D. 356. *St. Cyril of Jerusalem saith: (a)*
 “ The Apostles, and the old Bishops, the prelates of the Church, who delivered these, were much wiser than thee. Since then thou art a Son of the Church, do not corrupt the laws and institutes of the Fathers.” — So the *Catechist* thought it expedient to render the words, τοὺς θεσμούς. But since the Apostles are placed at the head of the tradition, the things whereof St. *Cyril* speaketh, were certainly the laws and institutes contained in the Scripture, as he supposed. Because, the same St. *Cyril*, in the very same book, saith, (b) “ Concerning the divine and holy myste-

(a) *Catech. 4. p. 66. Edit. Oxon.*

(b) Δεῖ περὶ τῶν θείων καὶ ἁγίων τῆς πίστεως μυστηρίων μὴ δὲ τοῦ τυχεροῦ ἀνεῦ τῶν θείων παραδίδωται γραφῶν, μὴ δὲ ἀπλῶς παιδανότητι καὶ λόγων κατασκευαίς παραφέρεσθαι. Μὴ δὲ ἡμεῖς τῶ ταῦτά σοι λέγοντι ἀπλῶς πισεύσης, εἰδὼς τὴν ἀπόδειξιν τῶν

“ mysteries of the faith, we ought not to deliver any thing, though never so small, without the divine Scriptures, nor be carried away with plausible and fair speeches. Neither shouldst thou believe me barely saying these things to thee, unless thou receivest the demonstration of the things declared from the divine Scriptures. For this is the safety, or security of our faith, which depends not upon words, which we invent, but upon the demonstration of the divine Scriptures.”——

And now, what can be plainer than this, *viz.* that in the words cited by the *Catechist*, to support the authority of tradition (such is his fate!) *St. Cyril of Jerusalem*, intended quite the contrary, speaking only of *Scripture institutes*?

St. Gregory Nyssen.

St. Gregory Nyssen has these words: A. D.

(c) “ Nor let any one say, that 370.
“ we take for granted what wants
“ to be proved ; for it is a sufficient demonstration of the truth of what we say,
“ that we have a tradition derived from our
“ ancestors to us, as a kind of inheritance transmitted from the *Apostles*, by the Saints, that
“ were their successors.”——But, here again we see the *Apostles* placed at the head of the tradition as before. And so the inheritance transmitted from them, by their successors, is nothing

τῶν καταγγελλομένων. Ἀπὸ τῶν θείων μὴ λάβης γραφῶν, ἡ σωτηρία γὰρ αὕτη τῆς πίστεως ἡμῶν, οὐκ ἐξ εὐρεσιλογίας, ἀλλ' ἐξ ἀποδείξεως τῶν θείων ἐς ἡμᾶς γραφῶν. *S. Cyril. Hierosol. Catech. ibid.*

(c) *S. Greg. Nyssen. contra Eunom. Orat. 3. tom. 2. p. 554. Edit. Paris.*

thing else, in *St. Gregory Nyssen's* notion of the matter, than the scripture doctrine, as it had been preserved and maintained by succession in the Christian Church. That this is the true and proper meaning of his words will farther appear from the sequel of his discourse, in the same place. For presently after *St. Gregory Nyssen* adds: (d) "Who is so silly and stupid as to imagine, that the doctrine of the Evangelists, and of the Apostles, and the other lights in the Church, that succeeded them, can be invalidated by the idle prate of those, who prove nothing of what they say?"—If any doubt can yet remain, what this Christian Father meant "by the tradition derived from our ancestors, to us, as a kind of inheritance transmitted from the Apostles by the Saints that were their successors:" I will only remind the Catechist, what the *subject*, and *occasion*, of that discourse against *Eunomius* (e) is; and then leave it to his own conscience to determine, whether *St. Gregory Nyssen* did not suppose, that the doctrine, he there asserted and maintained was the true doctrine of the scriptures.

St. Jerome.

A. D. *St. Jerome's advice is* (f) (as the Catechist saith) "Not to follow the custom of this time, but the authority of

(d) Τίς οὕτως ἡλίθιος καὶ κτηνώδης ὡς τῶν Ευαγγελιστῶν καὶ Ἀποστόλων, καὶ τῶν καθεξῆς ἐν ταῖς ἐκκλησίαις διαλαμψάντων ἀδελφεοῖράν τὴν διδασκαλίαν διὰ τῆς ἀναποδέετου φλυαρίας ποιῆσαι. *Greg. Nyssen. ibid.*

(e) *Eunomius* was the follower of *Ætius*, as he was of *Arius*. *Vid. Socrat. Hist. Eccl. lib. 2. cap. 35.*

(f) *Ep. ad Dardan.*

“ of the antient writers.”——A notable proof, surely, of the authority of unwritten customs, or traditions! However, the *Catechist* is mistaken in saying, that this is *St. Jerome’s* advice: for, his words only contain a simple declaration of his own practice, in the case referred to by him.

(g) “ But if, saith he, it is the custom of the “ *Latins* not to admit it, (i. e. *the Epistle to the “ Hebrews*) into the canon of Scripture, nor the “ Churches of the Greeks, by the same liberty, “ receive *the apocalypse of John*, we however receive both; by no means following the custom of this [*present*] time, but the authority “ of antient writers, who commonly cite testimonies from both, &c. — What relation this passage hath to the business in hand, the Reader, will now be able to judge; and so I might leave him to make his own reflections; presuming that he can as easily distinguish between the rule of Religion itself, and the way to find out this rule, as between a publick road and a finger-post, which pointeth to it. But, I shall embrace this opportunity to animadvert a little upon a certain stale pretence in favour of tradition, which is commonly the last refuge of a dying cause; viz. that it is only by tradition that we know what are the *canonical books* of Scripture, and that they are inspired. So the Catechist: (h) “ The Old Testament comprehends “ the

(g) Quod si eam *Latinorum* consuetudo non recipit inter Scripturas canonicas; nec *Græcorum* quidem ecclesiæ *Apocalypsin Joannis* eadem libertate suscipiunt: et tamen nos utraque suscipimus, nequaquam hujus temporis consuetudinem, sed veterum Scriptorum auctoritatem sequentes, qui plerumque utriusque abutuntur testimoniis, &c. *Hieronym. Ep. ad Dardan. tom. 3. p. 311. Edit. Colon. Agrip.*

(h) *S. Catech. Part. 1. Less. 26.*

“ the writings of *Moses* and the Prophets, and
 “ the New contains those of the Apostles and
 “ Evangelists, as we are informed by *tradition*.
 “ Faith obligeth us to believe all that these books
 “ contain, because they were written by the in-
 “ spiration of the Holy Ghost, as we are as-
 “ sured by *tradition* ; and obedience obligeth us
 “ to receive all *Apostolical traditions*, because they
 “ come from the same fountain.” — But, in an-
 swer to this, I must observe: (1.) Supposing
 what such writers affirm to be true, it will not
 serve the purpose intended. For if tradition be
 the proper mean to discover the rule of Religion ;
 it doth not follow, that tradition itself is that rule.
 On the contrary, if we will be determined by the
 general consent of the most antient Christian
 Fathers, to whom the Catechist hath appealed,
 tradition assures us, that the holy Scriptures are
 the rule of Religion. But, (2) The assertion is
 false and groundless, according to the notion of
 tradition laid down by the Catechist, *viz.* as con-
 taining somethings which the Apostles delivered
 by word of mouth, over and above what is *writ-*
ten in the Scriptures. Because (1.) The Scrip-
 tures attest their own *Inspiration*. (i) As the Scrip-
 tures of the New Testament attest the inspirati-
 on of the Old : so they further attest the Gift
 of inspiration conferred upon the Apostles and
 others, and by consequence the inspiration of
 their writings : for, common sense and reason,
 the best of Critics, telleth us, that the light of
 inspiration was, at least, as requisite in *writing*
 the Christian doctrine for the benefit of all suc-
 ceeding ages, as it was in the first *preaching* of
 it, to answer the proper ends of divine inspira-
 tion.

(i) 2 Tim. iii. 15, 16.

tion. And then, (2) In relation to some of the *canonical books* of Scripture; as a mark of their genuineness, the sacred writers subscribed their writing with their own names, under their own hands. (k) And as the inspired Pen-men, have ascribed them to themselves, in their own hand writing, tradition, in *this* case, informs us of nothing more, than what is *written*, in those books of Scripture. And, as to the other books of scripture, we are not acquainted with their authors, by any such thing as *a tradition, which the Apostles delivered, by word of mouth, over and above what is written in the Scriptures*; but by the written testimony of the antient fathers, and of their successors, who have sufficiently attested this fact. For, (3.) This argument of the Traditionist, when searched to the bottom, will appear to be a mere juggle, confounding apostolical tradition, with common history; which I imagine are two distinct things. For, did the Apostles, during their life time, assemble in council, and settle the canon of Scripture, and then, by *word of mouth* declare, or *deliver* to posterity, *This is the true canon of Scripture*? No such thing, that I know of is pretended, and much less proved. And yet *this*, or the like principle, is what the advocates for tradition must argue upon, in the present case, if they will be consistent with themselves, and stick to their own notion of tradition, as stated before. It is plain there-

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fore,

(k) e. g. "The salutation by the hand of me Paul." Colos. iv. 18. "He shuts up this Epistle telling them, that he sends his salutation to them written with his own hand, that they might be assured that the rest of the Epistle was dictated by himself." *Cradock's Apost. Hist* p. 343. See also *Benson* on 2. Thes. 3. 17. and 2 Pet. 3. 1.

fore, that these Gentlemen only play with the word *tradition*; and, as I said before, confound Apostolical tradition, with common history. — In respect to the real genuineness of the sacred books, I observe, these holy writings were genuine before any declaration was made of their being so: because no testimony of their being genuine could have made them so, if they had not been genuine before. Now, upon whatever grounds the several books of Scripture were at first known and declared to be genuine, let those grounds be produced, and we can discern their genuineness, and judge for ourselves, as well as those, who pronounced the first judgment on them, or made the first declaration concerning them, without relying upon their authority at all. (l) I shall only add, we certainly know the sacred writings to be genuine upon the best historical evidence, not merely from the testimony of the Catholic Church, (though we allow it its due weight) but from the confession of heretics, and even heathens: (m) who all refer to them, without disputing their authenticity, as the genuine records of the Christian institutes. But, this testimony of common history is a very different thing from *Apostolical tradition*. Therefore all those persons, who would fetch an argument from hence in favour of *tradition*, as the rule of religion, must labour under a great confusion of ideas, not *knowing what they say, nor whereof they affirm*. And at this rate of proceeding, a *Julian*, a *Porphyrie*, and a *Celsus*, together with almost the whole tribe of heretics, must be taken for our

(l) See *M. Pool's Dialogue* &c. p. 47, 48.

(m) *Vid. Grot. de Verit. Relig. Christ. lib. 3. cap. 2.*

our guides and leaders in religion, as well as the most orthodox Fathers of the Christian Church.

To return now to what St. *Jerome* saith of the epistle to the Hebrews, in the passage cited above. The Latins, as we learn from his account, had not received this epistle into the canon of Scripture, in his days; but they have received it since that time. So little pretence hath the Church of Rome, to the claim of infallibility! And it is plain that St. *Jerome* himself paid no regard to her authority, particularly as to the point of settling the canon of Scripture; because he preferred the authority of antient writers, before the custom, or practice, of that Church, as even *Huetius* himself hath not scrupled to remark. (n)

Let us now proceed with the Catechist.

And in another place he saith: (o) " Though Scripture-authority could not be pleaded, the consent of all Christendom would pass for an equivalent to a command; for a great many things are no less observed in the Church, upon the foot of tradition, than if they were enjoined by a written law." — Here again it is proper to consider the connection of the words, as they lie in St. *Jerome's* discourse; which is written in the form of a dialogue between a *Luciferian*, and an orthodox Christian, meaning St. *Jerome* himself. The *Luciferian* there saith, (p) " do you not know, that it is

M 2

" also

(n) *Demonstr. Evang. Prop. 1. Sect. 2.*

(o) *Hieronym. advers. Luciferian. tom. 2. p. 166.*

(p) *Lucif.* — An nescis, etiam ecclesiarum hunc esse morem ut baptizatis postea manus imponantur, et ita invocetur Spiritus Sanctus? Exigis ubi Scriptum est? in Actibus Apostolorum. Etiam, si Scripturæ autoritas non subesset, totius orbis

“ also the custom of the Churches, to lay hands
 “ on those that are baptized, and so invoke the
 “ Holy Spirit? Do you demand where it is
 “ written? In the Acts of the Apostles. Yea
 “ if there were no Scripture authority, yet the
 “ consent of the whole world in this matter
 “ would obtain the force of a command. For,
 “ many other things also, which are observed
 “ in the Churches, upon the foot of tradition,
 “ have acquired the authority of a written law,
 “ &c.” — To this, the orthodox answers: “ I
 “ do not deny that it is the custom of the
 “ Churches, &c.” — Upon which passage I
 take leave to remark: (1.) The words cited by
 the Catechist are not the words of the *Ortho-*
dox, but of the *Luciferian*; and therefore they
 are as improperly alleged for St. *Jerome*’s opini-
 on; as it would be to produce the words of the
Epicurean, in *Cicero*, (q) as declaring his own sen-
 timents of the deity. (2.) When the *Luciferian*
 asketh the question; “ do you demand where it
 “ is written?” This is a plain intimation, that,
 in all religious controversies, *the Orthodox* were
 wont to appeal to the Scripture, as the rule.
 (3.) The argument urged by the *Luciferian*, from
 prevailing customs, unsupported by Scripture, is
 only an argument *ad hominem*; which is not ab-
 solutely conclusive. (4.) If the *Orthodox* owned
the fact; yet he did not acknowledge the *right*
 of unwritten customs. What St. *Jerome*’s real
 opinion

orbis in hanc partem consensus instar præcepti obtineret :
 Nam et multa alia, quæ per traditionem in Ecclesiis observan-
 tur, auctoritatem sibi scriptæ legis usurpaverunt, &c. — *Or-*
thod. Non quidem abnuo hanc esse ecclesiarum consuetudinem,
 &c. *Hieronym. ibid.*

(q) *De natura Deorum.*

opinion was concerning such matters may be clearly learned from other parts of his writings. He saith: (r) " Of those things which men invent of their own heads, as from Apostolical tradition, without the authorities and testimonies of Scripture, they are smitten with the sword of God." — From hence it is manifest, that St. *Jerome* allowed of no pretended Apostolical traditions, as a rule of Religion, but what were founded on the *Scriptures*. Accordingly in another place, he saith: (s) " By the divine Scriptures alone you may understand the whole will of God." — Once more, he hath these words: (t) " Whatever is said after [that is the *writing of the Apostles*] let it be rejected; let it be of no authority. Though any one after the Apostles be holy, though he be eloquent, he hath no authority." Nay, but let me add this passage also, (v) " Every thing that we say, should be confirmed by the holy Scriptures." — In these passages, St. *Jerome*, (if these be his writings) hath expressed himself

(r) Sed et alia, que absque auctoritate et testimoniis Scripturarum, quasi traditione Apostolica reperiunt, atque confingunt, percutit gladius Dei. *Com. in Aggai. tom. 5. p. 225.*

(s) Scito itaque, in Scripturis divinis, per quas solas potes plenum Dei intelligere voluntatem. *Ad Demetriad. de Virg. tom. 9. p. 4.*

(t) Quodcunque aliud postea dicetur, abscindatur, non habeat postea auctoritatem. Quamvis ergo sanctus sit aliquis post Apostolos, quamvis disertus sit, non habet auctoritatem. *Com. in Psalm. tom. 7. p. 110.*

(v) Omne quod loquimur, debemus affirmare de Scripturis sanctis. *Ibid. pag. 128.*

N. B. I have quoted the commentaries on the Psalms as *Jerome's*. But I lay no stress upon them. For, though *Marianus Victor* accounted them genuine, others have rejected them.

himself so fully and strongly in behalf of the Scripture, as the rule of religion, that with no manner of consistency can he be supposed to approve of any unwritten customs at all, except in the sense of *St. Basil*, as explained before. But, it must be confessed, that according to the latitude, in which both he, and others of the Christian Fathers understood the Scripture, (and, I do not say the double, but *treble* sense (w) which they put upon the words of Scripture) they might easily imagine many things to be founded in the Scriptures, which in any sober and rational construction have no proper foundation there at all: of which more hereafter, when we come to enquire into the original of unwritten traditions.

St. Epiphanius.

A. D. 368. Next cometh *Epiphanius*, a writer of little account with judicious and learned men. “ For, the authority of *Epiphanius*, saith *Le Clerc*, (a) will never be of any great weight with those, that are acquainted with antiquity; who rashly uttereth many things, whereof all men are now ashamed.” Let the Catechist then make the best of him and welcome.

In

(w) Et jubetur nobis, ut eloquia veritatis, id est Scripturas sanctas intelligamus tripliciter. Primum juxta litteram: secundo medie per tropologiam: tertio sublimius, ut mystica quæque cognoscamus. *Hieronymus in Ezech. tom. 4. p. 375. Conf. Origen in Genes. tom. 1. p. 13. & al.*

(a) Nam *Epiphanius* auctoritas nunquam erit magni momenti, apud homines rerum antiquarum peritos; qui temere innumera effudit, quorum nunc omnes pudet. *Clerici Dissert. de Const. Apost. Sect. 3.*

In his first citation from *Epiphanius*, (b) this author censureth poor *Aerius*, for rejecting “ the
 “ apostolical institutions of Easter, the Wed-
 “ nesday’s and Friday’s fasts, &c. — And, I
 confess, *Aerius* was worthy the severest censure,
 if he rejected any *Apostolical institutions* whatever,
 truly and properly so called. But, how doth
 it appear, that the observance of *Easter*, &c.
 was an *Apostolical institution*? Why, the proof
 which *Epiphanius* produceth, is, *the Apostolical*
constitutions, as they are called, whereunto he re-
 ferreth just before, though with *some hesitation*. (c)
 Let us hear what a writer of more judgment,
 though a well-wisher to tradition too, hath said
 of those *Constitutions*. (d) “ The author of
 “ the *Constitutions*, saith *Dupin*, is an impos-
 “ tor, that endeavours every where to pass for
 “ *Clement*, a disciple of the Apostles, and who
 “ imputes to them all in general, and to every
 “ one in particular, diverse ordinances, that are
 “ in no wise consonant to the *Apostolical* ones;
 “ such are those concerning Churches built in
 “ the form of temples, catechumens, energu-
 “ mens, *fasts*, liturgies, unction, prayers for the
 “ catechumens and energumens; the ordina-
 “ tion of deacons and deaconesses, virgins, con-
 “ fessors, subdeacons; the benediction of oil
 “ and water; the first-fruits of tythes, *festival*
 “ *days*, the *celebration of Easter*, and many other
 “ things, *that were not practised in the time of the*
 “ *Apostles*, not to mention a great number of
 “ absurdities, and mistakes of time, together
 “ with

(b) *Epiphan. advers. Hæres. Vol. 1. p. 910.*

(c) Εἰ δὲ καὶ γὰρ τὸ τῆς ἀποστολικῆς τῶν ἀποστόλων λέγεται,
 &c. *Epiphan. ibid. Edit. Petav.*

(d) *Dupin. Eccles. Hist. Cent. 1.*

“ with some errors that are contained therein ;
 “ which evidently demonstrates, beyond con-
 “ tradition, that these constitutions were not
 “ composed by the Apostles, and even that
 “ they do not belong to *St. Clement*.” — (e)
 They are “ *censured* to be written in his name,
 “ by *Cardinal Baronius*, supposed by *Possevin* the
 “ Jesuit, that it will be a hard matter to prove
 “ them to be either Apostolical, or lawful, or
 “ at the least written by *Clement* himself,” saith
 Dr. *James*. — And another learned writer hath
 observed, (f) “ That book [*of Constitutions*] is
 “ full of fooleries and falsehoods ; by which it
 “ manifestly appears that those are mad, who
 “ would ascribe it to *Clement*, a person of the
 “ greatest gravity and veracity.” — To return
 now to *Epiphanius*, in regard to the *celebration*
of Easter, (which, as we have seen before, *Dupin*
 saith, was not practised in the time of the Apostles) the grand controverſie, which arose in the
 primitive Church about the time of keeping
 Easter, the contrary traditions that were pretend-
 ed, in the course of the dispute, together with
 the different manner of observing the preced-
 ing fast ; these things, after all the pains, that
 the Catechist hath taken, (g) to support the au-
 thority of the tradition, as from the Apostles,
 effectually destroy it. For, (1.) Is it conceiva-
 ble that the Apostles would institute the cele-
 bration of Easter, without fixing a time when
 Easter

(e) *James's Corruption of the Fathers*, p. 3.

(f) Ipse liber plenus est ineptiarum et mendaciorum ; è quibus evincitur insanire eos, qui *Clementi* viro gravissimo et veracissimo ascribant. *R. Coci Censura quorund. Scriptor. pag. 17.*

(g) *Long Catech. Part 2. Less. 32.*

Easter should be celebrated? (2.) Is it supposable that the Apostles would disagree about the time of keeping *Easter*? Can the Catechist himself suppose it, after he hath declared, (h) of the Apostles, that, “ they were all of them guided “ by the same infallible and unerring Spirit, and “ endeavoured, as much as was possible, to establish an uniformity in all Churches.” (3) Is it credible that the Apostles, would appoint the solemn observation of *Easter*, without directing the manner of introducing the solemnity, in relation to the preceeding fast; in the observance whereof there was however a great diversity of customs, in the Christian Churches. (i) This made *Socrates* to remark (k) “ Since no one can “ shew a written precept concerning this matter; “ it is evident that the Apostles left every body “ to their liberty, &c.” An observation, which, by the way, strikes at the authority of all unwritten traditions, as relating to matters left undetermined by the Apostles at the most, and consequently not instituted by their authority. (4.) If both the contending parties pleaded Apostolical tradition for their contrary customs; it was undoubtedly the most plausible plea they could argue in their own behalf, and in favour of a custom which they were loth to exchange for another, no better grounded than their own. And, after all this bustle, it might be owing

N

to

(h) *L. Catech. P. 2. Less. 31.*

(i) The English reader may consult upon this head *Thorn-dike on Relig. Assemb. p. 273. &c. Cave's Prim. Christian. p. 182. Taylor's Ductor Dubit. p. 633. &c.*

(k) Καὶ ἐπεὶ οὐδεὶς περὶ τοῦτου ἐγγράφον ἔχει δεῖξαι παράγγελμα, δῆλον ὡς καὶ περὶ τούτου τῇ ἐκάστῃ γνώμῃ καὶ προαίρεσιν ἐπέτρεψαν οἱ Ἀποστόλοι. *Socrat. Hist. Eccles. lib. 5. cap. 22.*

to a tenacious, unyielding temper, or to a zeal for their Christian liberty, more than to any thing else, that both sides equally insisted upon Apostolical tradition, to stop the mouth of their opponents. Therefore, (5.) The only medium left to end the warm dispute, and to reconcile the difference, was to let each party have their own humour and way. Since the one Side had as good a pretence to apostolical tradition, as the other ; the wisest course was to compound the matter between them, and to make a drawn battle of it, by allowing the different customs to be derived from different and contrary traditions. Thus was the affair salved up at the last. But, what can bring a greater discredit upon all pretended apostolical traditions, than the supposing that these traditions were opposite one to another? (6) I add, this famous controverſie, which arose in the second century, about the time of keeping Easter, effectually destroys the credit and authority of the Canons, and the Constitutions of the Apostles, as they are more commonly than properly called, because, one of those Canons, (l) hath expressly determined against the keeping of Easter at the same time with the Jews, as was the practice of the *Asiatic* Churches. There was the same determination or injunction in the constitutions also. (m) Now, if the time of keeping *Easter* had been thus precisely fixed, by any truly Apostolical Canon,

or

(l) Εἴ τις ἐπίσκοπος, ἢ πρεσβύτερος, ἢ διάκονος, τὴν ἀγίαν τοῦ Πάχα ἡμέραν πρὸ τῆς ἑαρινῆς ἑσθμερίας μετὰ τῶν Ἰουδαίων ἐπιτελέσει, καδαίρειται. (an. Apost. 5. in Coteler. Vol. 1. p. 443. Can. 7. in Zonar. et Balsam.

(m) Δεῖ οὖν ἡμᾶς, ἀδελφοί—τὰς ἡμέρας τοῦ Πάχα ἀκριβῶς ποιῆσαι μετὰ τροπὴν ἑσθμερινὴν—μηκέτι παρατηρούμενοι μετὰ Ἰουδαίων ἑορτάζειν, &c. Constit. Apost. lib. 5. cap. 17.

or Constitution; there could have been no ground for the forementioned controversie about it. Therefore the said Canons and Constitutions must be of a later date, and therefore they must be too weak a foundation, whereon to build the Apostolical institution of Easter. So that *Epiphanius* himself, as I observed before, could not appeal to such authority without some hesitation and expressing a doubt whether he should do it, or not. —

In relation to the *Wednesday's* and *Friday's* fasts, &c. mentioned by *Epiphanius*, in the same citation from him, *Dr. Cave* (n) hath this remark, (which discovers that he laid no great stress upon his authority) “ This custom *Epiphanius* (*how truly I know not*) refers to the Apostles.” In the same place he saith of *Lent*, “ that this fast “ was far from being an apostolical canon, as a “ learned Prelate of our Church hath fully “ proved,” referring to *Bp. Taylor*. (o) So much then for the *Catechist's* first quotation from *Epiphanius*.

His next citation from the same Author is under the head of the same heresy: (p) but it immediately relateth to the custom of *praying for the dead*: a practice which it seems, *Aerius* also disapproved, and for which *Epiphanius* pleaded tradition; but upon no better ground than the *Apostolical constitutions* (q) again; the value

N 2

and

(n) *Primit. Christ. Part 1. Chap. 7.*

(o) *Ductor Dubit. book 3. chap. 4. Rule 13. Numb. 9, &c.* p. 622. where, and in some following pages he largely and learnedly discusseth this Point.

(p) *Epiphan. tom. 1. p. 912.*

(q) Ὅτι τῶν ἀναπαυσαμένων ἐν Χριστῷ ἀδελφῶν ἡμῶν δεηθῶμεν, &c. *Constit. Apost. lib. 8. cap. 41.*

and authority whereof may be determined, by what hath been said before.

The third and last citation from *Epiphanius*, I shall give the Reader at length; because it is both short, and full, and clearly expresth his notion of tradition. *And in another place he says.*

(r) “ But we must make use of tradition; for
 “ all things cannot be taken from the holy
 “ Scripture, forasmuch as the Apostles delivered
 “ some things by writing and others by tradi-
 “ tion.” — Thus, *Epiphanius* hath declared
 himself in favour of tradition: a declaration wor-
 thy the man! Now, that we may be able to
 form a true judgment concerning the nature and
 validity of his testimony, (besides what hath
 been noted before, of his general character, as a
 writer) let us consider what *Epiphanius* saith, at
 other times, in behalf of the *Holy Scriptures*.
 Speaking of the *Valentinians*, he saith, (s) “ Such
 “ being their doctrine, as neither the Prophets
 “ preached, nor the Lord taught, nor the A-
 “ postles delivered: which concerning all things
 “ they vainly pretend to have understood above
 “ others; reading, or learning it from unwrit-
 “ ten traditions.” — He then complains that,
 (t) “ They disturbed the order and connection
 “ of the Scriptures; and, as much as in them
 “ lay, dissolved the members of truth.” —

Thus, *Epiphanius* represents the Scriptures as a
 body

(r) *Epiphan. tom. 1. p. 511.*

(s) Τοιαύτης δὲ τῆς ὑποθέσεως αὐτῶν οὐσης, ἣν οὔτε Προ-
 φῆται ἐκήρυξαν, οὔτε ὁ Κύριος ἐδίδασκεν, οὔτε Ἀπόστολοι πα-
 ρέδωκαν. ἦν περὶ τῶν ὅλων ἀνχοῦσι πλείον τῶν ἄλλων ἐγ-
 νακέναι ἐξ ἀγράφων ἀναγινώσκοντες. *Tom. 1. p. 193.*

(t) Τὴν μὲν τάξιν, καὶ τὸν εἰρμόν τῶν γραφῶν ὑπερβαίνον-
 τες, καὶ ὅσον ἐφ' ἑαυτοῖς λύοντες τὰ μέλη τῆς ἀληθείας. *Epi-
 phan. ibid.*

body of truth, he appealeth to the Scriptures as the rule of faith, against the *Valentinians*, and he blames those antient heretics for having recourse to unwritten traditions, in support of their unscriptural opinions, as *Irenæus* had also censured them before, upon the same account. — Again: (v) “ Whom shall I believe? To whom shall I assent? Of whom shall I receive life by instruction? From the holy Evangelists, and men inspired, who have declared that the word was sent from the Father? or, from these followers of *Paulus Samosatensis*, &c.” — Now, since *Epiphanius* urged the authority of Scripture, against the heretics; he must be supposed to look upon the Scripture as the rule and standard; unless he played fast and loose between Scripture and tradition, as either served his present turn; which will make his authority worth little. In order then to make him consistent with himself; when he saith *the Apostles delivered some things in writing, and others by tradition*; we must put the same qualifying sense upon his words, as we did before upon the words of St. *Basil*, saying, “ Of the doctrines, that have been preserved, and preached in the Church, some we have in writing, and others we have received in a mystery, from Apostolical tradition.” The manner of expression is so much alike, in both these authors, that their words will easily admit the same construction. But, it hath been shewn before, that all the distinction, which St. *Basil* can be properly understood to

(v) Τίνοι τοίνυν πίσεύσω; τίνι συνδῶμαι; παρὰ τίναν λάβω ζῶν ἐν μαθήμασι; παρὰ τῶν Ευαγγελιστῶν, καὶ πνευματοφόρων—ἢ τούτων τῶν ἀπὸ Παύλου τοῦ Σαμοσατέως, &c.
Epiph. tom. 1. p. 612.

to make between written and unwritten doctrines, derived from the Apostles, is only *this*, viz. that the written doctrines are literally expressed in the words, and the unwritten doctrines are mystically contained in the sense, of Scripture. Therefore, in the passage under consideration, *Epiphanius* may be supposed, to insist upon the *use of tradition*, at the most, only as a mean to discover the mystical sense of Scripture. This notion appeareth to be confirmed by the manner in which the words are introduced. He saith, (w) “all the divine words do not need *allegory*, “but are to be taken as they are. But, it requireth consideration and judgment to understand the nature of every subject. And, we “must *also* make use of tradition, &c.” — By leaving out the word, *also*, the Catechist spoiled the connection; which being duely regarded, plainly sheweth, that *Epiphanius* joined tradition with judicious consideration, as the proper means to understand *Scripture subjects*, and rightly to distinguish between the *allegorical*, and the *literal* sense of the sacred writings, when they were to be taken one way, when another. (*) And thus accord-

(w) Ἄλλα πάντα τὰ θεῖα ῥήματα οὐκ ἀλληγορίας δεῖται, ἀλλὰ ὡς ἔχει. θεωρίας δὲ δεῖται, καὶ αἰδησίᾳ, εἰς τὸ εἶδέναι ἐκαστῆς ὑποθέσεως τὴν δύναμιν. Δεῖ δὲ καὶ παραδόσει κεχρῆσθαι, &c. *Epiphan. tom. 1. p. 510, 511.*

(*) The words of *Epiphanius* may be illustrated by a passage in *Tertullian* [*de præscript.*] where he is urging the necessity of having recourse to *tradition* for the conviction of heretics, who could not be convinced by the Scriptures, because they denied, or depraved, or misinterpreted the Scriptures. *Sed credant sine scripturis, ut credant adversus scripturas*: i. e. “But let them believe without the Scriptures, “that they may believe according to the Scriptures:” — implying that the doctrine of tradition was the very same with the doctrine of the Scriptures.

according to *Epiphanius*, also, the Scripture was the text, and the rule of religion, which tradition served only to explain, not to supply. For my own part I can see no other way to make him consistent with himself, than the method suggested. But, this, perhaps is a matter of no great importance. A writer of so little repute scarce deserved so much pains, as we have bestowed upon him. I will therefore dismiss him, after I have produced one passage more from *Epiphanius*, for the sake of taking notice of a little jesuitical artifice in his latin translator. (x) “As for the other mysteries belonging to baptism, and the more private mysteries, they are performed according to the tradition of the Gospel, and of the Apostles.” — In this place *Epiphanius* manifestly applies the word *tradition*, to the Scriptures. And therefore *Petavius*, in order, as I suspect, to give the passage a more traditionary turn and air, thought fit to translate the words thus: (y) “In respect to the other mysteries, as of baptism, and what are more private, they are performed with those rites and ceremonies, which be derived from the Gospel, and from the authority of the Apostles, and from tradition:” or, from the *authority* and *tradition* of the Apostles. What occasion had *the Jesuit* to introduce both these terms? And, why did he not joyn tradition to the

(x) Τὰ δ' ἄλλα μυστήρια περὶ λουτροῦ καὶ τῶν ἐνδεσθεν μυστηρίων, ὡς ἔχει ἡ παράδοσις τοῦ τε Ευαγγελίου, καὶ τῶν Ἀποστόλων οὕτως ἐπιτελεῖται. *Epiphani. tom. 1. p. 1105, 1106.*

(y) Quod ad alia mysteria pertinet, et quæ interioria sunt, ea ritibus illis, ac ceremoniis obeuntur, quæ ex Evangelio, et Apostolorum auctoritate, ac traditione profectæ sunt. *Petavius.*

the Gospel, as *Epiphanius* joyned it? If he did not intend to insinuate something in favour of *oral tradition* beyond what he had any ground for in the text? So cunning are some persons to serve an hypothesis! I wish that *Petavius* were the only instance and example of such ingenuity.

St. Chrysostom.

A. D. 398. St. *Chrysostom* says, (2) “ The Apostles did not deliver all things in writing, but many things without; “ and these are as worthy of credit as the other; “ therefore *we think* the tradition of the Church “ also to be worthy of credit. It is a tradition “ enquire no more.”—This is St. *Chrysostom*’s gloss upon those words of St. *Paul*: “ Stand fast, “ and hold the traditions, which ye have been “ taught, whether by word or our epistle.” A passage, which the Catechist hath alleged among his testimonies from *Scripture* in behalf of *tradition*; but to how little purpose hath been shewn before: and therefore our reasoning against him will hold good against St. *Chrysostom*, if he put the same construction upon the Apostles words. In reference to his gloss upon the place, I observe (1.) Some things were held by the Christian Church, in his days, which did not appear to be expressed in the *Scripture*. (2.) These things, I suppose are what St. *Chrysostom* called by the name of *tradition*. But (3.) He only *exhorts* his hearers to adhere to this tradition, or to esteem it worthy of credit. For, he doth not say,

(2) *Chrysost.* in 2 *Theff.* 2. 15.

say, as the Catechist hath falsely rendered his words, (though had he followed the translator his usual guide, he might have learned to construe better) “ *we think* the tradition of the Church also to be worthy of credit, &c.” St. *Cbrysofom* doth not say so; but what he saith is *this*: (a) “ *Let us think*, or account, the tradition of the Church also to be worthy of credit.” — Now, so far is this from being any intimation, (as the Catechist seems willing to insinuate, by the turn he hath given to the expression) that the tradition of the Church was *in fact* thought worthy of credit; as that it implies the direct contrary, *viz.* that persons in those days were not well-affected to tradition; otherwise what occasion had St. *Cbrysofom* to give them such an exhortation? (4.) The argument with which he enforced his advice, is grounded upon the words of St. *Paul* aforesaid. And, I confess, there would be no force in his argument, but upon the supposition, that the *tradition* of the Church was the same with what the Apostles had delivered, as he saith, without writing. But yet, any one may perceive, that he rather insinuates than affirms it. And, to me it is plain, that St. *Cbrysofom* considered the question as a tickle point, which he did not care to dwell upon; for he makes quick dispatch with it, as being glad to rid his hands of it, so soon as possible, dismissing it with a rhetorical flourish: *It is a tradition, enquire no farther.* Well hit off! Was not the *golden mouthed Orator* conscious to himself that the matter would not bear enquiry?

O

What

(a) Ὡς καὶ τὴν παράδοσιν τῆς ἐκκλησίας ἀξιόπιστον ἡγή-
μεθα. i. e. quamobrem ecclesiæ quoque traditionem censemus
esse fide dignam.

What reason I have, to ask this question, the reader will presently see; by considering how fully *St. Cbrysoftom* hath declared himself upon other occasions for the Holy Scriptures, as the proper, and a perfect rule of religion. For, he expressly saith (b) “ If then we would search
 “ the Scriptures with exactness, and not cursorily, we shall be able to compass our salvation:
 “ if we would be thoroughly conversant in them,
 “ we should be instructed both in right opinions,
 “ and a good life.” — Again (c) “ We have
 “ therefore received the faith in its unmixed purity, that we might be under no necessity to
 “ have recourse to numberless heresies, but,
 “ without giving ourselves any trouble of this
 “ kind, reject as spurious, whatever any one
 “ may dare to add thereunto, or take away
 “ therefrom. For as those, who give rules, do
 “ not put men upon a curious enquiry after
 “ many measures, but bid them keep to the
 “ rule given; so it is in opinions. But, no
 “ body will attend to the *Scriptures*. For, if
 “ we did attend, we should not only escape fall-
 “ ing

(b) Ἄν οὕτω τοίνυν δέλωμεν τὰς γραφαὶς ἐρευνᾶν μετὰ ἀκριβείας, καὶ μὴ ἀπλῶς, δυνισόμεθα τῆς σωτηρίας ἡμετέρας ἐπιτυχέειν. Ἄν διαπαντός αὐταῖς ἐνδία τρίβωμεν, καὶ δογμάτων ὀρθότητα καὶ βίον εἰσόμεθα ἠκριβωμένον. *St. Cbrysof.* Hom. 52. in *Johan.* cap. 8.

(c) Ἡμεῖς δὲ διὰ τοῦτό τὴν πίσιν παρελάβομεν ἀπλῶς ἵνα μὴ ἀναγκάζομεθα μυρίαῖς ἐπιέναι αἵρεσις καὶ πράγματα ἔχειν, ἀλλ' ὅπερ ἂν ἡ προσδεῖναι, ἢ ἀφελεῖν τις ἐπιχειρήσειεν ἐκείνης, τοῦτο νόθον εἶναι νομίσωμεν. Καθάπερ γὰρ οἱ τοὺς κανόνας διδόντες οὐκ ἀναγκάζουσι μυρία μέτρα περιεργάζεσθαι, ἀλλὰ τὸ δοθέν ἐκείνῳ κατέχειν κελύουσιν; οὕτω καὶ ἐπὶ τῶν δογμάτων. Ἀλλ' οὐδεὶς βούλεται ταῖς γραφαῖς προσέχειν. Εἰ γὰρ προσείχομεν, οὐ μόνον οὐκ ἂν περιεπέσομεν τῇ ἀπάτῃ, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἑτέρους ἀπαταμένους ἀπηλλάξομεν ἂν, καὶ τῶν κινδύνων ἐξελκύσομεν. Hom. 8. in *Hebr.* cap. 5.

“ ing into error ourselves, but also rescue those
 “ that are deceived, and draw them out of
 “ danger.” — Once more, (d) “ A Greek
 “ [or a Gentile] cometh, and saith; I am will-
 “ ing to become a Christian, but cannot tell
 “ to whom I should joyn myself. For, there is
 “ among you great strife and division, much
 “ contention: what opinion shall I embrace?
 “ What shall I choose? Every one saith truth
 “ is on my side: whom shall I believe? being
 “ myself unacquainted with the *Scriptures*, and
 “ they all pretend the same thing. Now, this
 “ maketh for us. For, if we said, that we rely
 “ upon arguments, you might well make a bus-
 “ tle: but when we say, that we believe *the*
 “ *Scriptures*, which are plain and true, it will
 “ be easy for you to judge in the case. If any
 “ one agrees with them he is a Christian. If
 “ any one contradicts them, he is far from this
 “ rule. What then if that man come and say,
 “ that, this hath Scripture on its side; and you
 “ on the other hand affirm the contrary, and
 “ ye explain the Scriptures differently, each draw-
 “ ing their sense to his own opinion? I answer,
 O 2 “ have

(d) Ἐρχεται Ἕλλην, καὶ λέγει ὅτι βούλομαι γενέσθαι Χριστιανός, ἀλλ' οὐκ οἶδα τίνι προσαύμαι. Μάχη παρ' ὑμῖν πολλὴ καὶ εἰς πολλοὺς διόρυβος. Ποῖον ἔλομαι δόγμα; τί αἰρήσομαι; ἕκαστος λέγει, ὅτι ἐγὼ ἀληθεύω, τίνι παιδεῶ; μηδὲν ὅλως εἰδὼς ἐν ταῖς γραφαῖς, καὶ ἐκεῖνο τὸ αὐτὸ προβάλλοντα. Πάντῃ τοῦτο ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν. Εἰ μὲν γὰρ λογισμοῖς ἐλέγομεν παιδεῖσθαι, ἐκώτως ἐδορύβου. Εἰ δὲ ταῖς γραφαῖς λέγομεν πιστεύειν αὐταὶ δὲ ἀπλᾶ καὶ ἀληθεῖς, εὐκολὸν σοι τὸ κρίνομενον. Εἰ τις ἐκέναις συμφωνεῖ, οὗτος Χριστιανός. Εἰ τις μάχεται οὗτος πόρρω τοῦ κανόνος τοῦτου. Τὶ οὖν ἂν ἐκεῖνος ἐλθὼν εἴπῃ, τοῦτο ἔχειν τὴν γραφὴν, σὺ δὲ ἕτερον λέγεις, καὶ ἄλλως παρεξηγήσῃς τὰς γραφὰς τὰς διανοίας αὐτῶν ἔλκοντες; Σὺ οὖν, εἰπέ μοι, νοῦν οὐκ ἔχεις, οὐδὲ κρίσιν; Ἔς. *Hom.* 33. in *Act. Apost.* cap. 15.

“have not you understanding and common
“sense to judge for yourself?”—— Well said
John Cbrysoftom! He referreth the honest en-
quirer after sacred truth, not to *oral tradition*
nor to an infallible judge of controversies, but
to the *Scriptures*, and his own impartial judg-
ment. Right protestant and reformation princi-
ples; which I heartily recommend to the Cate-
chist, and to all his brethren.

St. Augustin.

A. D. Proceed we now to St. *Augustin*, in
396. the close of the fourth Century, and
enquire, how far his authority will go,
to support the tottering fabrick of *tradition*.
Perhaps like another *Atlas*, he with his broad
shoulders will sustain the ponderous weight alone.
St. Augustin speaks thus. (c) “ But as to his admo-
“ nition, that we should recur to the fountain-
“ head, that is, Apostolical tradition, and from
“ thence direct our course down to our own
“ times, this is very good advice, and what
“ without doubt ought to be done.” — Now,
this passage, which the *Catechist* hath produced
in favour of *tradition*, looketh quite another way ;
and so is directly against him. Because the
person, whose advice *St. Augustin* here approves,
as what *ought* to be followed, is *St. Cyprian* ;
whose words *St. Augustin* referreth to, in that
very

(e) Quod autem nos admonet [*scil* Cyprianus] ut ad fontem. recurramus, id est, ad Apostolicam traditionem, &c. Traditum est ergo nobis, sicut ipse commemorat, quod sit unus Deus, et unus Christus, et una spes, et una fides, &c. *St. August. cont. Donatist. lib. 5. c. 26.*

very epistle, (f) where *St. Cyprian* so strenuously opposeth unscriptural tradition. And therefore by the fountain-head of Apostolical tradition, *St. Augustin* must intend the same thing with *St. Cyprian*, viz. the doctrine of the Apostles as delivered in the Scripture. For, as Mr. *Marshall* hath rightly observed upon the place: (g) “ This was plainly the written word of God ;
 “ what either Christ or his Apostles delivered by
 “ word of mouth, and was consigned to writ-
 “ ing, &c.”

And again, (saith the *Catechist*, proceeding to another citation from *St. Augustin*) (h) “ There
 “ are many things, which the universal Church
 “ holds, and are for this reason rightly believed
 “ to be instituted by the Apostles, though they
 “ are not found in writing.” — In which words, I observe, *St. Augustin* is arguing against *St. Cyprian*, concerning the rebaptization of heretics, a practice which he was condemning in the *Donatists*. And so he saith, (i) “ But the
 “ Apostles have, indeed, given no command in
 “ reference to this matter; but that custom,
 “ which was opposed to *Cyprian*, [that is by
 “ *Stephen*] should be believed to have taken its
 “ rise from their tradition: as there are many
 “ things, which the universal Church holds, and
 “ are for this reason rightly believed to be insti-
 “ tuted

(f) *S. Cypr. Ep. 74.* See his words cited before.

(g) See *Marshall's Cyprian. Part 2. page 250.*

(h) *St. August. ibid. cap. 23.*

(i) Apostoli autem nihil quidem exinde præceperunt, sed consuetudo illa, quæ opponebatur *Cypriano*, ab eorum traditione exordium sumpsisse credenda est: sicut sunt multa, quæ universa tenet Ecclesia, et ob hoc ab Apostolis præcepta bene creduntur quanquam scripta non reperiantur. *St. August. ibid.*

“tuted by the Apostles, though they are not
 “found written:” that is in the Scripture. —
 Upon which passage I remark, (1.) *St. Augustin*
 is here maintaining unwritten tradition in direct
 opposition to *St. Cyprian*. This confirms the
 account, which hath been before given, of *St.*
Cyprian’s exploding all *unwritten traditions*, and
 declaring for the *Scripture*, as the only rule. And,
 though the Authority of the Fathers is much
 weakened by one Father’s opposing another:
 Yet, the Authority of a Father in the middle
 of the third century will be allowed, I presume
 to have more weight, than the authority of a
 Father in the end of the fourth, or in the be-
 gining of the fifth century. *St. Cyprian* lived and
 flourished about an hundred and fifty years near-
 er to the fountain-head, than *St. Augustin*. (2.)
 By comparing these words of *St. Augustin*, with
 what he saith upon other occasions, concerning
 the *Scripture*, as the rule and standard in matters
 of religion; it will appear, that his words re-
 quire some qualifying sense to save him from self-
 contradiction. — Some persons may distinguish in
 this case between doctrinals and rituals; suppos-
 ing *St. Augustin* to intend the former, when he
 speaks of the *Scripture* as the rule; and that he
 maintains *tradition*, in relation to the latter. But
 of this distinction the *Catechist* cannot avail him-
 self, according to the plan, upon which he hath
 all along proceeded. Because he quotes the fa-
 thers promiscuously in behalf of *tradition*, with-
 out any such reserve; and many of the citations
 from them relate only to points of faith. Thus,
 like a thorough-paced traditionist he hath closely
 followed the *leading* steps of certain writers, who
 deny the *Scripture* to be the *rule of faith*; al-
 though

though to their great mortification, their own *Bellarmino* hath confessed that (k) “ The Prophetical and Apostolical books are the true word of God, and a certain and stable rule of faith.” — Waving then the distinction aforesaid, as incompatible with our *Catechist’s* system of *tradition*, we must have recourse to another supposition, viz. that in *St. Augustin’s* opinion, the things, which he saith were *not found written*, were things contained in the sense, though not expressed in the words, of *Scripture*. I say, we must make this supposition; otherwise we shall find *St. Augustin* egregiously contradicting himself by what he declares, in other places, concerning the *Scripture*, as being the proper rule and standard in matters of religion. For, he saith: (l) “ Let us not bring false ballances, where we may weigh what we will, and how we will, at our pleasure, saying, This is heavy, this is light; but let us bring *the divine ballance, from the Holy Scriptures*, as out of the Lord’s treasures, and in that weigh what is heavy.” — Again: (m) “ Let them de-

“ mon-

(k) Prophetici et Apostolici libri sunt verum Verbum Dei, et certa ac stabilis regula Fidei. *Vid. Amsl. Bellarm. Enervat. tom. 1. p. 1.*

(l) Non afferamus stateras dolosas, ubi appendamus quod volumus, et quomodo volumus, pro arbitrio nostro, dicentes, hoc grave, hoc leve; sed afferamus divinam stateram de Scripturis sanctis, tanquam de thesauris dominicis, et in illa quid sit gravius appendamus. *De Baptism. cont. Donatist. lib. 2. cap. 6.*

(m) Ecclesiam suam demonstrent, si possunt, non in sermonibus, et rumoribus Afrorum, non in Conciliis Episcoporum suorum, non in literis quorumlibet disputatorum, in signis et prodigiis fallacibus, quia enim contra ista verbo Dei præparati et cauti redditi sumus: Sed in præscripto legis, in prophetarum

“ monſtrate their Church, if they can, not by
 “ the talk and rumours, [*or oral tradition*] of
 “ the *Africans*, not by the councils of their own
 “ biſhops, not by the writings of any diſputers,
 “ by falſe ſigns and miracles, &c. — but by the
 “ rule of the law, &c.—that is, by all the ca-
 “ nonical authorities of the ſacred books. —
 “ No man can attain ſalvation and eternal life,
 “ but he that hath Chriſt for his head. But, no
 “ man can have Chriſt for his head, unleſs he is
 “ in his body, that is, his Church; which, as
 “ alſo himſelf the head, we ought to acknow-
 “ ledge in the holy canonical Scriptures, and
 “ not ſeek for it in the various rumours and
 “ opinions, and doings, and ſayings, and viſi-
 “ ons of men. — But, whether they hold the
 “ Church, let them ſhew from the *canonical books*
 “ of

phetarum prædictis, in pſalmorum cantibus, in ipſius Paſtoris
 vocibus, in evangelistarum prædicationibus et laboribus, hoc
 eſt in omnibus Canonicis ſanctorum librorum authoritatibus.
 — Ad ipſam vero ſalutem ac vitam æternam nemo pervenit,
 niſi qui habet caput Chriſtum. Habere autem caput Chriſ-
 tum nemo poterit, niſi qui in ejus corpore fuerit, quod eſt Ec-
 cleſia; quam ſicut ipſum caput in Scripturis ſanctis canonicis
 debemus agnoſcere, non in variis hominum rumoribus, et
 opinionibus, et factis, et dictis, et viſis inquirere. — Sed
 utrum ipſi Eccleſiam teneant, non niſi divinarum Scripturarum
 Canonicis libris oſtendant; quia nec nos propterea dicimus
 nobis credere oportere, quod in eccleſia Chriſti ſumus, qui
 ipſam, quam tenemus, commendavit *Milevitanus Optatus*,
 vel *Mediolanenſis Ambroſius*, vel alii innumerabiles noſtræ
 communionis epiſcopi, aut quia in noſtrorum collegarum con-
 ciliis ipſa prædicata, &c. — Legimus in Actibus Apoſtolo-
 rum dictum de quibuſdam credentibus, quod quotidie ſcruta-
 rentur Scripturas, an hæc ita ſe habent. Quas itaque Scrip-
 turas, niſi canonicas legis et prophetarum? Huc acceſſerunt.
 Evangelia, Apoſtolicæ epiſtolæ, Actus Apoſtolorum, Apo-
 calypſis Joannis. Scrutamini hæc omnia, et eruite aliquid
 manifeſtum, quo demonſtretis Eccleſiam, &c. *De Unitat.*
Eccleſ. cap. 16.

“ of the divine Scriptures alone. For, neither do
 “ we pretend, that we ought to be believed as
 “ being in the Church of Christ, who hold that
 “ which *Optatus of Milevis*, or *Ambrose of Medi-*
 “ *olanum*, hath recommended to us, or other
 “ bishops without number of our communion,
 “ or because it is preached up in the councils of
 “ our colleges, &c. — We read it said in the
 “ *acts of the Apostles*, concerning some persons,
 “ that they searched the Scriptures daily, whether
 “ these things were so. What were those Scrip-
 “ tures? but the canonical books of the law,
 “ and the Prophets. To which are now added
 “ the Gospels, the Epistles, and Acts of the
 “ Apostles, and the Revelation of *John*. Search
 “ all these writings, and from thence produce
 “ something clear to demonstrate the Church,
 “ &c.” — Thus, in as strong terms, as one
 could wish, *St. Augustin* declares the Scripture to
 be the proper rule and standard of religion, in
 the Christian Church. For, he makes the Scrip-
 ture the rule whereby to prove the Church. But
 the Church can only be proved by the religion
 it holds. Therefore, according to him, the
 Scripture must be the rule of religion.

I come now to the last citation, which the
 Catechist hath given us from *St. Augustin*.

And once more : (n) “ Whatever is held by the
 “ universal Church, and was not instituted by
 “ councils, but hath been always retained, is most
 “ rightly believed to have been delivered by no
 “ other than Apostolical authority.” — *St.*
Augustin is here discoursing of infant-baptism, (o)
 P and

(n) *Augustin. de Baptism. cont. Donatist. lib. 4. Cap. 24.*

(o) Et si quisquam in hac re auctoritatem divinam quærat
 quanquam quod universa tenet Ecclesia, nec conciliis institu-
 tum,

and his words imply, that it had been practised in the Church : A fact which the *Pelagians* themselves never denied ; as undoubtedly they would have done, when they were pressed with an argument from infant-baptism, if they had any ground for the pretence. Now, I readily agree to the rule which St. *Augustin* hath laid down, in this place. And, when the *Catechist* can prove, by any evidence and authority, fit to be relied on, that the traditions, for which he contends, were *always* retained in the Christian Church from the beginning, I shall freely embrace them all as Apostolical institutions.

We have now considered, and discussed, all the testimonies, which the *Catechist* hath alleged from the fathers, in behalf of tradition, *during the four first Centuries*, — the period assigned to his *comprehensive* view of Christianity, in the title page of his book of *catechisms*. But, at the end of his list of fathers, the *Catechist* hath produced father *Innocent*, and father *Celestine*, two Popes : then follow two monks ; father *Vincent* of *Lerius* no mean writer, whose plain testimony to the ample sufficiency of Scripture we have seen before, (p) and father *Cassian*, who brings up the rear ; all of them writers of the fifth century. And at this rate of proceeding he might have gone forward to the sixth and seventh, and so on, to the seventeenth century, and to the fathers of our own times ; conformable to the notion

tum, sed semper retentum est, non nisi autoritate Apostolica traditum rectissime creditur ; tamen veraciter conjicere possumus, quid valeat in parvulis baptismi sacramentum, ex circumcissione, &c. *Contra Donatist. lib. 4. cap. 24.*

(p) See the Article of Stephen, bishop of Rome.

tion of *Lord Bacon*, who suggests (q) “ that the
 “ moderns are the true antients; because the
 “ world is now grown older; and therefore
 “ should be wiser than ever it was.” Accord-
 ingly, in the *conclusion* of his book, the *Catechist*
 hath given us, a new catalogue of fathers, or
 children, whatever you please to call them; but
 since he did not think fit to introduce them,
 under the head of authorities, or *testimonies*, in
behalf of tradition, they do not properly fall un-
 der our present consideration. Only one thing
 I must remark, *viz.* that, according to his old
 wont, he formally allegeth, as favouring his hy-
 pothesis, what was intended and spoken against
 all such vain pretenders to pure and genuine
 antiquity. Witness those words of Abp. *Wake*,
 with which the *Catechist* gravely concludes his
 book. (r) “ Let not any fond pretences of an-
 “ tiquity, or possession, amuse us. Against
 “ God and truth, there lies no prescription:
 “ nor ought we to be at all concerned to for-
 “ sake errors, though never so antient, for more
 “ antient truths.” That is to say, the errors of
 the Church of *Rome*, and all others of the same
 stamp, how high soever they may be traced,
 below the earlier date of the Scripture-times, the
 true and proper epocha of Christian antiquity.
 This is a fault, which I have often had occasi-
 on to censure in the *Catechist*; *viz.* that, by his
 manner of citation, he quite perverteth the sense
 and meaning of authors, either through igno-
 rance or design. Whenever therefore he shall
 P 2 again

(q) See *Lord Bacon's Works*. Vol. 2. pag. 380. Dr. *Shaw's*
Edition.

(r) *Defences of the Exp. of the Doctrine of the Church of*
England.

again undertake to answer for the truth of what he delivereth; I would advise him, once for all, to consider it better before-hand, and take more care to deliver the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth: that so, he may not tinge his discourse with falsehood, because trial, or experience, is the proof of men, as the poet speaks. (s) But, perhaps, a scrupulous regard for the apostolical, or rather apocryphal constitutions restrains the *Catechist* from taking any notice of such kind of books. (t)

And now, I humbly ask his pardon, if at any time I have trespassed upon the rules of disputation, by treating the *Catechist*, in an unguarded hour, with more levity, or with greater severity, than the nature of the case required, and will justify, in the judgment of all candid unprejudiced and impartial Readers. But, human nature is so framed, by the wise author of our beings, that some things as naturally provoke one's indignation, as others are apt to excite mirth; and, according to *Tertullian*, where ridicule is just, it is due. (v)

Be-

(s) Οὐ φεύδει τέγξω
Λόγον. Διάπειρά τοι
Βροτῶν ἔλεγχος.

Pindar. Olymp. Od. 4.

(t) *The said constitutions* (lib. 1. cap. 6. & lib. 2. cap. 61.) prohibit the reading of heathen authors. And yet many of the antient fathers, e. g. *Clemens Alexandrinus*, *Tertullian*, *Origen*, &c. recommend the reading of such books: a plain proof that they knew of no such *Apostolical Constitutions*. Besides, if this had then been any constitution of the Christian Church, the Emperor *Julian the Apostate*, would have had no occasion to make the same prohibition. *Vid. Greg. Nazianz. Orat. 3. advers. Julian. tom. 1. Edit. Paris.*

(v) Si ridebitur alicubi materiis ipsis satisfiet. Multa sunt
sic

Before I conclude this section, where we have examined the *testimonies of the fathers in behalf of tradition*, I must remind the Reader, that I have joined issue with the Catechist in appealing to the fathers for their *opinion* upon this question, without resting the matter wholly upon their authority, having the concurrent suffrage of Scripture and right reason on our sides, that the written rule of religion, which God hath given us, is a perfect and compleat rule. And thus, according to the Philosopher. (w) “ *Though the consent* “ of the best, is of more authority than that “ of the worst; yet we seek truth, without laying “ a great stress upon these things.” It may, however, be proper to add, that the *Catechist* hath passed over in silence several of the antient fathers, in his lesson of *tradition*. A plain confession that neither he, nor the craftsmen of the like occupation, who have laboured before him in the same trade, could find any thing to their purpose in the said fathers; no, not so much as the shadow of an argument, otherwise they would have greedily caught at it, for want of substance; as, we see, they have done in many other cases. On the contrary, it were easy to produce sundry passages from those writers, declaring the *Scriptures* to be the rule of religion. But, *jam satis est*, &c. enough hath been said to
 verify

sic digna revinci, ne gravitate adorentur. Vanitati proprie festivitas cedit. Congruit et veritati ridere, quia lætans; de æmulis suis ludere, quia secunda est. Curandum plane, ne risus ejus rideatur, si fuerit indignus. Cæterum *ubicunque dignus risus, officium est*. Tertul. adv. Valentin. p. 389.

(w) Τὸ γὰρ ὁμολογηθὲν περὶ βελτιόνων ποῦ κυριώτερον ἢ τὸ παρὰ χαίρων, ἡμεῖς δὲ οὐ τούτων φροντίζομεν, ἀλλὰ τὰ ληθεύς ζητοῦμεν. Plato Sophist. Op. Pag. 173. Edit. Francf.

verify the truth of Mr. *Rushworth's* ingenious confession, (x) “ that he, who seeks *tradition* in “ the *fathers*, and to evince it by their testimony, takes an hard task upon him, &c.” And though the *Catechist* was so bold and hardy as to make the rash attempt; yet, to do him justice, he seemeth not to be over-confident of his success. For, in the close of all, he saith, (y) “ No remark needs be made upon these numerous passages, which have been cited, [*If so, I have performed a very needless task, in making so many remarks upon them*] but that IT IS “ HOPED, that what was said concerning the “ authority of Apostolical tradition in the last “ lesson, is sufficiently confirmed in this.” Modestly said, indeed! If the good man will now go on to hope, even against hope, I must leave him to take his course, and pursue my own.

S E C T. III.

An enquiry into the original of *Unwritten Traditions*.

I shall begin this section, and connect it with the former, in the words of a worthy prelate of the Church of *England*. (z) “ That “ the holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament

(x) See *ABp. Tillotson's Rule of Faith. Part 4. Sect. 1.*

(y) *Long Catech. Part 2. Lesson 33.*

(z) *Taylor's Ductor Dubit. Book 2. Chap. 3. Rule 14. Numb. 2. Pag. 359.*

“ tament do contain the whole will and law
 “ of God, is affirmed by the primitive fathers,
 “ and by all the reformed Churches: that the
 “ Scriptures are not a perfect rule of faith and
 “ manners, but that *tradition* is to be added,
 “ to make it a full repository of the divine will
 “ is affirmed by *the Church of Rome*.” The same
 learned bishop hath observed; (a) “ The word,
 “ which is now written, was first delivered;
 “ that, which is now *Scripture*, was at first *tra-*
 “ *dition*; and because it was afterwards called
 “ so, it hath been made use of, by these per-
 “ sons; who, knowing the change of words in
 “ descending Ages, is least discerned by man-
 “ kind; and that from words, which are fewer
 “ than things, most advantages can be made,
 “ by them, who love every thing better than
 “ truth; have pretended every saying of the
 “ Scriptures and fathers, in which *tradition* is
 “ used, to be a competent argument of the im-
 “ perfections of Scripture, and of the necessity
 “ of a supply, to be made by *tradition*.” —

The truth of which observation, I apprehend,
 hath been clearly shewn, in the preceeding re-
 marks. But, in the course of those remarks,
 we have had occasion to observe, more than
 once, that, according to the several passages in
 the primitive fathers, by *written traditions*, they
 understood the things clearly expressed in the
 words of Scripture; and, by *unwritten tradi-*
tions, the things more obscurely contained in
 the sense of Scripture. Now, here the *Catechist*
 may object; “ if the *traditions* of both kinds
 “ were grounded upon the *Scripture*, they should
 “ both be received with equal veneration.” To
 which

(a) *Ibid.* Numb. 15. pag. 367, 368.

which I answer two things. (1.) So far as any *traditions*, were rightly grounded upon *Scripture*, and fairly deduced from it, they ought to be received with all possible veneration. But, (2.) So far as any *traditions* have been wrongly, and weakly grounded upon the *Scripture*, or unfairly and falsely deduced from it, Christians are under no obligation to receive them at all, as Apostolical, but the contrary.

First, So far as any *traditions* are rightly grounded upon the *Scripture*, and fairly deduced from it, they should be received with all possible veneration. In his lesson, concerning the necessity of adhering to universal Apostolical tradition, the *Catechist* hath these words: (b) “Up-
“ on the same principle, and no other, stands
“ the necessity of observing the Lord’s day.”— But, if his meaning be, that *tradition*, in his sense, is the sole ground and foundation of observing the Lord’s day, (as his words seem to insinuate) I shall content myself at present with replying in the words of *Bishop Stillingfleet*, (c) “ Though the tradition of the Church, be a
“ great confirmation of the Apostolical practice,
“ in observation of the Lord’s day; yet that
“ very practice and the ground of it are sufficiently deduced from the *Scripture*.” — By the way, so early a writer, as St. *Ignatius* (d) declared against the observation of the *Jewish* sabbath, and for the observation of the Lord’s day, only. Which I remark, with an eye to what the *Catechist* hath advanced, concerning the ob-
serva-

(b) *L. Catech. P. 2. Lesson 32.*

(c) *Grounds of the Protestant Religion. Part 1. Chap. 6.*

(d) Μηκέτι σαββατίζοντες, ἀλλὰ κατὰ Κυριακὴν ζῶντες. *St. Ignat. Ep. ad Magnes. Sect. .9 Vid. Coteler in loc.*

servation of Saturday : (e) a practice introduced by the Judaizing Christians, into the Christian Church. (f) — Again, Infant-baptism is sometimes called an Apostolical tradition, particularly by *Origen*, and *St. Augustin*. But, as the latter argues for it, from the *Scripture* (of which before) so, I presume the *Catechist* himself will not deny, that infant-baptism hath any foundation in *Scripture*. — These things then, and all others that are rightly grounded on the *Scripture*, ought to be religiously observed in the Christian Church ; unless it can be made appear that they were only temporary institutions. On the other hand.

Secondly, So far as any *traditions*, have been wrongly and weakly grounded upon the *Scripture*, or unfairly and falsely deduced from it, Christians are under no obligation to receive them at all, as Apostolical ; but the contrary. Now this, perhaps, will be found to be the case, in respect to those unwritten things, which the *Catechist*, and others would obtrude upon us, under the notion of *Apostolical traditions* ; excepting such as have been specified before. That these things were not derived from the Apostles, by *oral tradition*, but founded upon the *Scriptures* themselves, by one kind of interpretation or another, hath been already suggested, and in some measure proved from the words of *St. Basil*. But, I shall now descend to the particulars, and examine them distinctly, in the order as they are mentioned by the *Catechist*, (g) from him : viz. the sign of the cross ; praying towards the

east ;

(e) *L. Catech. P. 2. Less. 37.*

(f) See *Cave's Prim. Christ. P. 1. Chap. 7.*

(g) *L. Catech. P. 2. Less. 32.*

east; the words of the invocation of the Holy Ghost, upon the Eucharistick elements; the unction in baptism; the consecration of the oil, and the water; trine immersion; renouncing the devil; praying standing on sundays, and between Easter and Pentecost.

1. I begin with *the sign of the cross*. In reference to which, the *Catechist* observes: (h) "This outward ceremony signifies, represents, and testifies, our faith in Christ crucified." — And thus, by his own account, *the sign of the cross*, may be derived from the *Scripture*, as a mystic improvement upon the history of Christ's crucifixion. For, the *Catechist* farther saith, in the same place: "Now the reason of this sacred ceremony may be learned from the *Scripture*; where it is said, that *Christ crucified, was to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Gentiles foolishness, &c.*" — So that the *Catechist* himself hath fetched the reason, and thereby lead us to derive the original, of this ceremony from the *Scripture*. But whether it is rightly grounded upon the *Scriptures*, is a point which must be left to every man's judgment; if the *Catechist* will be so good as to allow it. Those, who have a curiosity to enquire farther into the original of this antient rite, may consult the writers upon that subject. (i) For, as *the sign of the cross*, is still retained by an illustrious branch of the Protestant Church, I shall say no more of the matter at present; but only propose a few things to consideration, by way of apology for *the Church of England*, upon this head; and to let the *Catechist* see, that he cannot avail himself of her great

(h) *L. Catech. P. 2. Less. 148.*

i) Among the rest, the learned Mr. *James Peirce*.

great example, in the present debate. (1.) *The Church of England*, useth *the sign of the cross*, only in baptism, and without superstitiously ascribing to it any miraculous virtues, or operations. (2.) She doth not use this rite in baptism, as any part of the *Apostolical institution*; for she holds baptism to be compleat without it, declaring, "that the child so baptized is lawfully and sufficiently baptized." (k) (3.) Since *the Church of England*, thought it expedient, at the beginning of the blessed *Reformation from Popery*; to retain some of the old ceremonies; she must ever be admired and applauded for her wisdom and sobriety in retaining no more, but discarding all the rest: [especially when one considers, what such men as the *Catechist* are driving at, and whither their unhappy genius tends to lead their deluded followers.] "There is reason to celebrate and honour the wisdom and prudence of *the Church of England*, (saith one of her learned prelates) (l) which hath in all her offices retained but one ritual, or ceremony, that is not of *divine ordinance*, or *Apostolical practice*, and that is *the cross in baptism*." — And thus, I have the clear and express testimony of this learned bishop on my side, that *the cross in baptism* is no *Apostolical tradition*, or *institution*; and that it is not used as such in *the Church of England*.

2. *Praying towards the East*. Here again it is pleasant enough to observe, that the *Catechist* hath suggested sundry reasons of this practice, grounded upon the Scripture; and then addeth,

Q²

(m)

(k) *Office for private Baptism*,

(l) *Taylor's Ductor. Dubit.* p. 668.

(m) " These are the reasons given by the antients, for this ceremony ; though to us it would be reason sufficient, *if we had no other*, that the custom itself was the general practice of the primitive Church, and an *Apostolical tradition*."—Modest man truly ! However, we have his own confession, that they have other reasons, even Scripture-reasons. *Reasons given by the antients for this ceremony*, that is to say of the mystic kind.

3. *The words of Invocation of the Holy Ghost upon the Eucharistick elements*. In this article, also, the good *Catechist* will be our guide, and point out the way of deducing it from the *Scripture*. Witness his following words : (n) " The most proper way for God to accept the most excellent sacrifice that ever was offered, was to cause the Holy Spirit to diffuse his rays upon it. — And this is what our Saviour Christ declares in these words: *It is the Spirit that quickneth*, or giveth life, and power to the Sacrament ; *the flesh*, or sacramental body itself, *profiteth nothing*, &c. So the antients understood that text. And the Apostle seems clearly to speak of the cup in the Eucharist, and of the communicants receiving it, when he says, *We have all been made to drink into one spirit*. And the primitive Church, in confidence of this truth, did always, after the symbols had been offered as a sacrifice to God, pray to him to cause the Holy Spirit to descend upon them, &c."—And thus by the *Catechist's* own account, it appears, that the Invocation of the Holy Ghost upon the Eucharistick

(m) *L. Catech. 2. P. 19. Less.*

(n) *L. Catech. 2. P. 88. Less.*

rifstick elements, was grounded upon the Scripture, *as the antients understood it*; whether right or wrong, must be left to the judgment of others. However, the *Catechist*, I presume, was not ignorant, that the practice of giving thanks, or of praying over the Eucharistick elements, is supported by the example of CHRIST himself, as recorded in the scripture. (o) St. *Basil's* meaning therefore, in the passage under examination, seems to be this, that the *particular form of words*, in the said invocation, was not expressly prescribed in the Scripture, but yet deducible from it; in the same manner as he deduced his doxology, for which he is there pleading, from the Scripture form of baptism. (p)

4. *Unction in baptism.* In the traditionary gospel, or Apostolical constitutions, we read of a two fold Unction; the one before, the other after baptism. (q) But the latter is supposed to belong to confirmation. (r) And so it is the former that falleth under our present consideration. In reference to which, the *Catechist* saith: (s) “ The person to be baptized — receiveth the
“ strengthening preparation of Unction, with
“ consecrated oil, by which is signified, that
“ he is now cut off from the wild olive, and is
“ ingrafted into Christ, the true olive, &c.” A pretty shrewd hint that the baptismal unction was grafted upon the words of St. *Paul*. (t)

“ For,

(o) Matt. xxvi. 26. 1 Cor. ii. 24, &c. Compare Luke xxiv. 50 1 Cor. x. 16. 1 Tim. iv. 4, 5. Rom. xiv. 6. John vi. 2. Matt. xv. 36. 1 Sam. ix. 13.

(p) *Vid. Basil de Sp. Sanct. cap. 27. ut supra.*

(q) *Apostol. Constit. lib. 3. cap. 16.*

(r) *Vid. Coteler. ibid.*

(s) *L. Catech. 2. P. 49. Lefs.*

(t) *Rom. ii. 24.*

“ For, if thou wert cut out of the olive-tree,
 “ which is wild by nature, and wert grafted
 “ contrary to nature into a good olive-tree, &c.”
 But, perhaps, *Tertullian* hath given us a better
 account of the ceremony of unction, whether
 before or after baptism, as a learned writer hath
 collected his sense. (v) “ This unction, is ac-
 “ cording to the *Jewish dispensation*, wherein the
 “ High Priest was anointed, with oil out of an
 “ horn, as *Aaron* was by *Moses*.” (w) So now
 “ in the times of the gospel, all Christians being
 “ as *Tertullian* says, (x) Priests to God and the
 “ father: They were in resemblance thereunto,
 “ consecrated, by the anointing of oil, to their
 “ priesthood; or, as the aforesaid father ex-
 “ presses it. (y) “ The flesh is anointed that
 “ the soul may be consecrated.” — And thus
Tertullian hath suggested two Scripture grounds
 of this ceremony; one in the Old Testament,
viz. the practice of the *Jewish Church*, back-
 ed with another from the New Testament. (z)
 To the same purpose, *Dr. Cave*, having first
 taken notice of the other reasons, and significa-
 tions of this ceremony, mentioned by the *Catechist*,
 almost in his very words; addeth (what
 I suspect our *Compiler* thought proper to omit
 out of a jealous regard for the priesthood. But
 commend me to an honest man, whom no
 prejudices can bribe, or preconceived opinions
 bias, to disguise the truth, and misrepresent the
 sense

(v) *Lord King's enquiry into the Constitution, &c. of the Prim. Ch. Part. 2. chap. 5.*

(w) *De Baptism.*

(x) *Exhort. ad Castitat.*

(y) *De Resur. Carnis.*

(z) See 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9. Revel. i. 6.

sense of antiquity. I say, the worthy *Dr. Cave* addeth these words) (a) “ Or rather, probably
 “ to denote their being admitted to the great
 “ privileges of Christianity, *a chosen generation,*
 “ *a royal priesthood, an holy nation,* (as the A-
 “ postle stiles Christians) offices, of which a-
 “ nointing was an antient symbol, both of be-
 “ ing designed to them, and invested in them.
 “ And this account *Tertullian* favours, (b) where
 “ speaking of this unction in baptism, he tells
 “ us, ’tis derived from the antient, [i. e. *Jewish*]
 “ discipline, where the priests were wont to be
 “ anointed, for the priesthood. For some such
 “ purpose they thought it fit that a Christian (who
 “ carries unction in his very *name*) should be
 “ anointed as a spiritual king and priest, and
 “ that no time was more proper for it, than at
 “ his baptism, when the name of *Christian* was
 “ conferred upon him.”

By the way, it is an idle excuse, which the pa-
 trons of superstition allege, in behalf of their
 ungospel-like ceremonies, when they pretend to
 have derived them from the *Jewish* church. (c)
 For if the pretence were true, their plea is very
 preposterous and absurd, and rather a condemna-
 tion than any justification of their practice. These
Judaizing, (if not *Paganizing*) Christians should
 know, that, as *St. Paul* said to the *Galatians*,
 under the like spiritual *fascination*: (d) “ The
 “ law

(a) *Prim. Christ. P.* 1. Chap. 10. p. 317, 318.

(b) *De Baptism.* C. 7.

(c) See *Dr. Middleton's solid answer upon this head, to The Catholic Christian instructed.* Preface to his Letter from Rome.

(d) Ὡς ὁ νόμος παλαιῶν γενομένων ἐν Χριστῷ, &c. Galat. 3. 24. — *Galaticamur plane, si Judaicarum ceremoniarum—observantes sumus, &c. Tertul. de Jejun.* p. 779.

“law was our school-master, or rather our *Pædagogus*, to bring us to Christ,” our proper master and instructor in the divine science of religion. One is your master, even Christ, as he hath told us himself. (e) And thus, as the proper office of a *Pædagogus*, was to prepare young persons for the higher instructions of a *master*, (f) according to the antient discipline, or method of education, to which the learned Apostle manifestly alludes, (though the nature of his allusion, and beauty of his elegant comparison, are lost in our version) so the law as St. *Jerome* intimates, (g) “holding men to a stricter discipline, it reserved the perfect doctrine or instruction for the master.” The law of *Moses* was a wise institution, for the time and purpose it was designed to serve. But that dispensation being adapted, not to a state of maturity, but to a state of minority; and, as it were, to the infancy of God’s Church; it *indulged* them, like a good *Pædagogus*, (h) in many things, which it would be the most childish folly, at least, to retain and practise in the Christian Church. To refer us therefore to these *poor elements*, as the source of any religious rites, is certainly a poor excuse for them, without any warrant from the gospel. For, as *Epiphanius* himself had wit enough to say, with an air of wonder and

asto-

(e) *Matt.* xxiii. 8.

(f) In support of this distinction the following Authors may be consulted, *Xenophon. de Rep. Lacedem. Plato de Legib. lib. 7. Plutarch de Liber. Educand. Plin. Ep. lib. 5. 16. Clem. Alexandr. Pædagog. lib. 3. p. 264. Chrysostom. in Galat. iii. 24.*

(g) *Non tamen pædagogus magister, &c. Hieronym. Com. in Galat. 3. 24.*

(h) *Vid. Simplic. Com. in Epictet. Cap. 34.*

astonishment: (i) "How can it but appear a weak and foolish fancy, to suppose that after the perfection of Christ, there should be any occasion for a *Paedagogue*?" — But, let us leave the children to their play, and proceed with our business.

5. *The consecration of the oil and the water.* The reason and necessity of this consecration the *Catechist* hath, in his way shewn, from the Scripture, (k) and so we might save ourselves the trouble of any further enquiry about it. — But, the consecration of the oil may, perhaps, be better accounted for, by what hath been said under the last article. Because the oil, with which the Priests under the law were consecrated, was *holy oil*, being appropriated to a holy use, and kept for that purpose in the tabernacle. (l) — As to the consecration of the water, which (if we can believe the *Catechist*) (m) "Is thereby rendered capable of washing away sin," (tho' the Apostle *Peter*, (n) doth not attribute the saving efficacy of baptism to the water, but to another cause:) how such an effect came to be assigned to baptism, will not be difficult to guess, from sundry passages of Scripture. (o) This notion then being once entertained, it easily suggested the propriety of consecrating the water

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for

(i) Πᾶς οὐχὶ μᾶλλον βραχείας ἐννοίας, καὶ εὐσθείας μᾶλλον δευχθήσεσθαι ὁ λόγος τῶν τὰ τοιαῦτα λεγόντων, ὅτι μετὰ τὴν τοῦ Χριστοῦ τελείωσιν πάλιν παιδαγωγοῦ χρεία, &c. *Ephraim.* tom. 1. p. 1032.

(k) *L. Catech. P. 2. Less. 49.*

(l) Exod. xxx. 31. 1 Kings i. 39. *Vid. Reland. Antiq. Sac. Vet. Hebr. Part 1. Cap. 5. Sect. 17.*

(m) *Ibid.*

(n) 1 Pet. iii. 21.

(o) Mark i. 4. Acts xxii. 16. Ephes. v. 26. Titus iii. 5.

for the purpose intended (though I do not remember to have read, that *John Baptist* consecrated the river *Jordan*.) Because, the wonderful change, which the consecration was imagined to make in the water; so wonderful, it seems, as “ To alter its qualities and powers, without “ changing its substance:” (p) I say, such a wonderful, and more than wonderful change in the water might well be supposed to require all the force of consecration, not to say *incantation*. — And thus we seem to have traced the original of this custom also from the Scripture; but from the Scripture mistaken and misunderstood. And this, I doubt not, will prove to be the true source of all the other religious customs, which have no real foundation in Scripture, implicit or express; consequently they could not be *Apostolical traditions* or *institutions*. And, where is the wonder! If the very same men, who can one while find a mystical meaning in Scripture, where there is none, should at another time, and when they happen to be in a different mood, understand the Scripture literally, when it ought to be taken with the allowance of figure? Such is the humour of some Critics! — Before I dismiss this head, I must take leave to remark that our pious Catechist resolves the necessity of consecrating the oil and water into the same cause, and so puts it upon the same footing, with the sanctification of our common food. (q) “ From this pollution by the fall, (saith he) “ seems likewise to proceed the necessity of blessing, or sanctifying, every thing that we take “ for the sustenance of our outward man, &c.” — He

(p) *L. Catech. ibid.*

(q) *L. Catech. ibid.*

— He hath indeed, assigned a different reason of *grace at meals*, in another place: (r) otherwise, according to this account, *Adam* had no occasion for it, during his state of innocency, But, what I would chiefly observe, here, is *this*; viz. that the *Catechist* should not have been so shy under the preceeding article of producing *Tertullian's* reason for the *unction* in baptism, nor take any offence at that father's notion of the Christian priesthood, as including the whole body of Christians; when, under *this* article, he hath shewn the necessity of every Christian's being a priest to consecrate or sanctify his daily bread and water.

6. The trine immersion. The very mention of this ceremony is enough to raise any ones suspicion, that it had its rise from the form of baptism prescribed by our Lord Christ, (s) viz. "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." But, let us hear what account the *Catechist*, hath given of this matter. (t) "This immersion (saith he) is performed thrice. — once at the distinct name of each person of the blessed Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: which represents both the profession of faith in the holy Trinity, in whose name persons are baptised; and also Christ's three days burial; and his resurrection on the third day." That is, *according to the Scriptures*. Well! this other unwritten custom appears to be, either properly or improperly, derived from the Scripture. Improperly,

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I ap-

(r) *L. Catech. P. 2. Less. 18.*

(s) *Matt. xxviii. 19. Vid. Limborch. Theolog. Christ. lib. 5. cap. 67. Sect. 12.*

(t) *L. Catech. P. 2. Less. 50.*

I apprehend. For, had the primitive Church practised the trine immersion, as an *Apostolical institution*, they would hardly have presumed to lay it aside; as they did in the western Church; when some persons made a bad use of it as an argument of tritheism, and against the unity. And, if this was a good reason for laying aside the custom; it seems to be as good a reason for never beginning, and much less for reviving the practice. So that, upon the whole, I conclude, the Apostles made no such canon, as that, which passeth under their name, for the *trine immersion*: (u) or, as the canon expresseth it, *three baptisms*. (w)

7. *Renouncing the devil*. Concerning which practice, I observe, that without any *Apostolical tradition*, it might be derived from the nature of Christian baptism, as a solemn rite of dedication to the service of the one true God; and, from the scripture account of the opposition between the kingdom of *Christ*, and that of *Satan*, in the world. (x) Besides this, there was a concurrence of other circumstances, which might direct the primitive Christians to insist more explicitly upon a formal renunciation of the devil, at the time of baptism, very congruously to the nature and design of this ordinance, as explained before. For, (1.) It may be supposed that the Gentiles, who embraced the Christian religion, had many of them been dedicated, perhaps in their infancy, (y) to demons and idols. (2.)

(u) Can. Apost. 50.

(w) Τρία βαπτίσματα.

(x) John xvi. 2. 2 Cor. iv. 4. 1 John iii. 8.

(y) Vid. Spencer de Legib. Hebr. lib. 2. cap. 13. sect. 4.
1 Cor. x. 20, 21.

(2.) They had, however been deeply engaged in the devil's vile service, and in all the abominations of idolatry. Not only so, but (3.) They were in danger of relapsing into their former course, by apostacy, under the violence of persecution. These things I mention for the *Catechist's* edification. And, whether there is now the same reason and necessity, that there was *then*, for persons making a formal renunciation of the devil; or, whether there can be any propriety at all in attempting *to fire*, or even *to blow the devil away*, (2) out of those, who are born, and bred Christians, whose *children* are said *to be holy, not unclean*: (a) I say, whether there is any sort of propriety in this way of proceeding, I submit to his further consideration.

8. *Praying standing, on sundays; and between Easter and Pentecost.* In relation to this custom, the *Catechist* saith: (b) "The sixth commandment of the Church is, to pray standing on all sundays and every day between Easter and Pentecost, in respect to, and in remembrance of our saviour's resurrection." — Be it so: then the resurrection of Christ, as recorded in the Scripture, may be deemed to have given occasion to this ceremonious practice. *St. Basil*, as we have seen before, hath assigned some farther reasons of the custom, but all referring to the Scripture. The *Catechist* proceeds: (c) "This commandment is enforced by the authority of the twentieth canon of the first great council of *Nice*, held, A. D. 325." — But,

(2) See *Long Catech. Part 2. Less. 47.*

(a) 1 Cor. vii. 14.

(b) *L. Catech. Part 2. Less. 43.*

(c) *Ibid.*

But, had he attended to the preamble of that canon, (d) he might have spared what follows. (e) “ But, this custom of praying standing, “ at the above mentioned-times, is founded up- “ on much higher authority, it being an Apostolical tradition, received by *all* Churches from “ the beginning.” For, by the said preamble, it appears that the custom was not observed in all places alike, and this difference of custom was the very thing, which gave occasion to the canon itself. Therefore it could not be an *Apostolical tradition*, according to the rule, which the *Catechist* hath laid down, viz. (f) “ Every practice, “ which we find to be observed in all ages, and “ by *all Churches*, without discovering the establishment and origin of it, *in any place*, ought “ to pass for an *Apostolical tradition*.” I say, according to this rule, the custom under consideration could not be an *Apostolical tradition*; because it was not universal, before the council of Nice made it so. (g) “ It was not *every where* “ observed.” And yet the *Catechist* hath the assurance to say, (h) “ We find it *practised every where*, observed with *great exactness*, for above “ twelve hundred years, &c.

Thus have we examined, one by one, all the unwritten customs alleged from *St. Basil*, in the forecited lesson; and generally, with the good help of the *Catechist*, who hath represented the fathers

(d) Επειδὴ τινὲς εἰσιν ἐν τῇ Κυριακῇ γόνυ κλίνοντες, &c.
Can. 20 Concil. Nic.

(e) *Ibid.*

(f) *Ibid.*

(g) —ἐν πανταχοῦ παραβλαττόμενον, Zonar. *ibid.*

(h) *Ibid.*

fathers pretty justly upon *this point*, (i) we have traced out some sort of Scripture grounds for them, which might serve for a foundation of such practices without any Apostolical tradition, among persons fond of mystery, and of external decorations in religion. The mystical and allegorical interpretations of Scripture, might easily give rise to these symbolical rites, which were but a kind of *allegory in action*, and hence they properly had the name of *mysteries*. But, if as the *Catechist* urgeth, (k) “*St. Basil* believed that the Apostles settled them by divine authority,” in any other sense than what hath been before explained; (l) I desire to be excused from subscribing to his belief, nor is *St. Basil’s* faith any rule for mine, or any other man’s. On the contrary, it is my firm belief and persuasion, that the Christian religion was at first delivered to the world by the Apostles of Jesus Christ; as *simplex munditiis*, and with the same divine simplicity, as it is literally represented and described in their inspired writings. For, sure I am, that divine wisdom would

(i) With this restriction we must understand the character given of the *Catechist’s* performance by a very ingenious and learned writer. *Dr. Middleton’s Preface to Remarks on two Pamphlets* &c. pag. 3.

(k) *L. Catech.* 2 P. 32. *Left.*

(l) To what has been said before, concerning *St. Basil’s* notion of the *Scripture*, as the rule of religion, in contradistinction from *tradition*, properly so called, may be added the following passage: *Ἐπεὶ δὲ ἐκπύρωσις πίστεως, καὶ ὑπερηφανίας κατηγορία, ἢ ἀδτεν τι τῶν γεγραμμένων, ἢ ἐπεισάγει τῶν μὴ γεγραμμένων.* *Basil Hom. de Fide. i. e.* “It is a manifest defection from the faith, and a conviction of pride, either to reject any thing that is written, or to introduce any thing that is not [*written*]:” as the sense is given, and the sentence produced by *Dr. Taylor. Duct. Dubit.* p. 363.

would not misrepresent it to the world in the publick and authentic records of the Christian faith. But, as the genius of mankind is too prone to superstition, and the first Christians of every denomination were tinged with their peculiar prejudices; so the extravagant spirit of allegory, as we have seen, early crept into the Christian Church, and too much prevailed after the Apostolic age. Hence it came to pass, that many *holy inventions* (with a *thousand* whereof the *Catechist* yet prays to be inspired,) (m) were extracted from the sacred writings, by a kind of ecclesiastical chimistery, which men of superstitious minds may still be apt to look upon, as the very elixir and quintessence of Christianity; but since they have no solid foundation in the Scripture; since they appear contrariwise, to be weak imaginations, no way suitable to the *manly* spirit and design of the gospel: all sensible and sober persons will treat them with just contempt, as a sort of odd fanciful and ridiculous devices, fitter for a conjurer than a Christian, whatever might be allowable in the childish *Jew*, or in a mad Pagan.

It is time now to dismiss the Reader's patience; but, I would mention two antique ceremonies more, the one belonging to baptism, the other to the Lord's supper.

In relation to the latter, the *Catechist* insisteth much upon the *mixture*. (n) And, I doubt not that in St. *Cyprian's* time, this custom was thought to have some foundation in the *Scripture*, because (as we have seen before) this eminent father disclaimed all unscriptural traditions, and yet

(m) *Introductory Discourse*, p. 32.

(n) *L. Catech.* 2. P. 100,—103. *Left*.

yet declared for the mixture. (o) Accordingly the *Catechist* saith: (p) “ now that the holy Scriptures do shew that our Lord himself instituted “ the mixed cup, is manifest &c.” And if so let it be retained by all means: it is a sober rite, and I have not a single word to say against Scripture institutions. But yet there is more shadow than substance, in his arguments, to prove the point: a shadow however, might serve to lay the foundation of this practice, as well as of some others, in the Christian Church. It is foreign to my present design to enlarge upon this matter, since the *Catechist* doth not pretend the mixture to be an *Apostolical tradition*. Nevertheless the candid Reader will excuse the following remarks, (1.) This expression, *the fruit of the vine*, (q) doth not properly imply a mixture of wine and water, but the contrary. That there is a quantity of aqueous particles contained in the juice of the grape, according to *Galen*, (r) or that wine is originally produced from water, I shall not dispute; but, in this case, the water being transfused into the substance of the wine, and embodied with it; what hath this to do with the mixture of wine and water, things specifically different from each other? In answer to what he urgeth from the *Mishna*, (s) “ Which (he “ saith) is the most antient, and most authoritative of the *Jewish* writers, next to the Old “ Testament:” I shall refer the *Catechist* to a sett
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(o) *St. Cyprian. Ep. 63.*

(p) *Ibid. Lefs. 101.*

(q) Γενήματος τῆς ἀμπέλου. *Mat. xxvi. 29.*

(r) *Lib. quarto, de simplic. Medicam. Vid. Casaub. Animadv. in Athen. lib. 2. c. 4.*

(s) *Ibid. Lefs. 102.*

of Jewish writers, far more antient than the compiler of the *Miscbna* (t) for the proper sense of this phrase, *the fruit of the vine*. That expression of the Prophet *Isaiah*, (u) *the fruitful vine*; the *Seventy* render thus, (w) *the fruit of the vine*. So that, in their judgement, *the fruit of the vine* could not signify *wine mixed with water*, unless they thought it the nature and property of a fruitful vine to produce both wine and water; which I imagine no one will pretend. (2.) The argument from the book of *Proverbs* (x) is, to say the least, far fetched. To *minge* wine is a form of expression probably derived from the custom of mixing not only water, but other ingredients with their wine, in the Eastern countries: but, from thence it came to be used to signify no more than filling the cup, or serving with wine, whether mixed or unmixed. Of this use of the word, examples occur, in the New Testament, (y) as well as in other authors. (z) Moreover, as there is no necessity for understanding the passage in the *Proverbs*, of the Eucharist; so no mention is there made of wine mingled with *water*. At wisdom's *feast*, methinks one might modestly expect a little better entertainment, than wine taken down with water, especially considering

(t) *The Greek Version* of the *Seventy*, is supposed to be made 277 years before Christ, and the *Miscbna* compiled about 150 after Christ. See *Prideaux Connection*. V. 1. B. 5. V. 2. B. 1.

(v) *פֶּן פִּדְיָהּ* Isai. xxxii. 12.

(w) *ἀμπέλου γενήματος*. 70.

(x) Come eat of my bread, and drink of the wine that I have mingled. *Proverbs* ix. 5.

(y) *Revel*. xiv. 10. *ταῦ κεκρασμένον ἀκράτου*. i. e. poured out (literally mixed) without mixture. *Comp. Revel*. xviii. 6.

(z) *Vid. Cleric. in Rev.* xiv. 10.

ing that for men to have their *wine mingled with water*, is esteemed no great favour, but the contrary. (a) Therefore, in honour to the master or mistress of the feast, it seems more decent and rational, by *mingled wine*, to understand wine mixed with some aromatic ingredients, or *spiced wine*. (b) Accordingly in the same book of *Proverbs*, *mixed wine* is represented as a very potent and generous liquor, by reason of the rich ingredients that were put into it. (c) And, in the book of *Isaiah*, we find a woe denounced against them, “that are mighty to drink wine, and “men of strength to *minge strong drink*.” (d) But, one would think it required no great strength, and much less could be any woful crime, to drink water mingled with their liquor. (3.) The argument taken from the use of *mixed wine*, in the passover, is equally inconclusive. The passover of the *Jews* was a full meal; which therefore required a proper quantity of liquor to digest their food. And so it was necessary to mix water with their wine, for small beer. But, undoubtedly, they did not think themselves obliged to conclude the feast without one generous glass. The learned bishop *Fell*, saith: (e) “The “*Rabbies* agreed it to be a thing indifferent, “whether the cup of their Postcænium were “mixed or not.” Now this cup *after supper* is what our blessed Saviour took, and blessed, (f)

S 2

when

(a) *Thy wine mixed with water. Isai. i. 22.*

(b) *Cantic. Chap. 8. 2.*

(c) — They that go to seek *mixed wine*, Prov. xxiii. 30.
— cum notissimum sit aromatibus vina fuisse permista.
Cleric. in loc.

(d) *Isai. v. 22.*

(e) *Not. in St. Cyprian. Ep. 63.*

(f) *Luke xxii. 20. 1 Cor. iv. 25.*

when he first instituted the Eucharist. It is, therefore uncertain, at the most, whether he used the mixture upon that occasion; the thing, it seems, was not necessary, nor therefore can he be rationally supposed to make it essential to the ordinance of the Lord's supper. — But, admit the supposition that the Eucharistick cup, which our Savior blessed, contained a mixture of wine and water, *this* as well as the *unleavened bread*, was a mere accidental circumstance. Dr. Cave expresseth himself well, upon this head: (g) “ Although it should be granted “ that our Saviour did so use it, [i. e. *the wine* “ *mixed with water*] — of which nevertheless, “ the history of the gospel is wholly silent: yet “ this being a thing in itself indifferent, and accidental, and no way necessary to the Sacrament, could not be obligatory to the church, “ but might either be done, or let alone.” — The *Catechist* was aware, that this argument from the passover; in behalf of the mixture, would hold as strongly for the use of unleavened bread in the Eucharist; and therefore he hath armed himself against it, by a nice distinction between *matter and quality*. (h) But, this distinction will do him no service. For, as the specific difference of bodies ariseth from the different modifications of the same matter, according to the philosophers; so their different qualities adhere to their respective form of matter so modified. And if the *Catechist* will contend that leaven is bread; yet, I suppose he will allow it to be a species of bread, different from some other kind of bread; otherwise, there would be no difference

(g) *Prim. Christ. P.* 1. chap. ii,

(h) *Ibid. Lefs.* 100.

rence between leavened and unleavened bread. "Leavened bread, saith he, is a species of bread ; " but wine is not a species of wine and water." True : but mixed wine is a species of wine. And let me observe, that unleavened bread, was more essential to the passover, than the mixture can be proved to be. I shall only add, (4.) *St. Paul*, speaking with an eye, as is commonly supposed, to the ordinance of the Lord's supper, says of the disorderly *Corinthians* : (i) " one is hungry, " and another is *drunken*." From whence it may be inferred that they used *mere* wine, nor did the Apostle, when he set himself to reform abuses among them, recommend the mixture, though *that* surely, if any, was a proper occasion for doing it.

There is another argument alleged for the mixture by some of the antients, (k) but the Catechist did not think fit to urge it, being, perhaps, ashamed of it. However, when persons have no good reasons for any practice, they must take up with such as they can find. The argument is grounded upon a passage in the book of *Revelations*. (l) viz. " *The waters*, which thou " sawest, where *the whore* sitteth, are peoples " and multitudes, and nations, and tongues."—Demonstration ! or at least, excellent illustration ! *Risum teneatis amici ?*

Again, in reference to *baptism*, I would glance a little at the custom of giving a *taste* of *milk* and *honey* to the baptized person. (m) This practice, also, might be easily introduced into the Christian

(i) 1 Cor. ii. 21.

(k) *St. Cyprian*. Ep. 63.

(l) *Revel.* xvii. 15.

(m) *L. Catech.* P. 2. *Less.* 50.

tian Church without an *Apostolical tradition*, and only by the help of a pious invention. The notion of baptismal regeneration did early prevail among the primitive Christians. And there seems to be some foundation for it, in the words of *Cbrist* and *St. Paul* (n) So that, if persons would be content to understand Scripture-terms according to Scripture-times, (a proper rule of criticism,) (o) the notion may be very defensible; though, under a change of circumstances, nothing would be more ridiculous and absurd. (p) But this, together with some other matters may be the subject of some future lucubrations. At present, let me observe, that since baptized persons were considered as *new-born*, or *born-again*; a pious fancy naturally suggested the propriety of giving them a taste of milk and honey (*consecrated* to be sure) in token of their spiritual infancy; (q) because these things were then the common food of young children. (r) “Hence it is, saith the learned *Bochart*, (s) that at baptism, wherein believers were regenerated, the antients gave a taste of milk and honey; — because, as he adds, infants in those days were fed, not only with milk, but with honey also.” — Besides; those good men, who first began the practice, might imagine that some texts of scripture favoured

(n) *John* iii. 5. *Tit.* iii. 5.

(o) Ut probe intelligatur Scriptor quivis, consuetudines et opiniones popularium ejus esse tenendas. *Clerici Ars Critic.* tom. i. P. 2. cap. 12.

(p) *Vid. I. Owen. Theolog. lib. 6. cap. 5.*

(q) Lactis et mellis prægustare concordiam, ad Infantiae significationem. *Hieronym.* tom. 2. p. 166.

(r) Πρῶτον τὸ παιδίον μέλιτι, ἔτα γάλακτι ζωοποιεῖται. *Ep. Barnab. cap. 6. Vid. Coteler. & Voss. in loc.*

(s) *Hierozyic. lib. 4. cap. 12. Op. tom. 3. Col. 525. Edit. Lugdun. Bat.*

favoured this mystical and symbolical use of honey and milk. For the latter, the words of *St. Peter* (t) might serve well enough: “as new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the word, &c.” As to the former, it might seem to be countenanced by what is said in the Gospel, (u) of our Saviour’s eating of a honey-comb, after his resurrection. Because honey was esteemed, by the antients a great preservative against putrefaction. (w) And thus a pious imagination might suggest again, that a taste of honey was very proper to be given the baptized person, in token of his being born, and *risen with Christ*, to an incorruptible and immortal life.

I will conclude this particular, in the words of an excellent writer. (x) “The custom of giving milk and honey to the new baptized persons, whether he were a grown man or an infant, continued down to *St. Hierom’s* time: for he mentions it. (y) And how much longer I know not. It hath, however, for a long time been forborn. ’Tis natural to suppose, that this, being only an emblem to signify that the new baptized person is as a new born babe, was left off at such a time when, the world being come into the Church, there were hardly any more baptisms but of babes in a proper sense, who needed no such representation to signify their infancy.”

And

(t) 1 *Pet.* ii. 2.

(u) *Luke* xxiv. 42, 43.

(w) Mellis quidem ipsius natura talis est, ut putrescere corpora non sinat. *Plin. Nat. Hist. lib. 22. cap. 24.*

(x) *Wall’s Hist. of Infant B. P. 2. chap. 9.*

(y) *Adv. Luciferian. ubi supra.*

And now, by this large specimen it may appear to any unprejudiced person, that the *unwritten customs* might be easily introduced into the Christian Church, without any *Apostolical tradition*: and whether they were not so in fact, is left to the judgment of the candid and impartial reader. But, in order to give a little further light into the question, I will conclude this enquiry into the original of *unwritten traditions*, with the following observations.

First, It was a principle, early entertained and propagated among the primitive Christians, that (z) “ It was lawful for any one, for every private Christian, to invent and constitute, whatever he judged convenient and serviceable to religious purposes, saving the respect due to *tradition*.” — And thus, provided old customs were retained (*e. g.* two sacraments) as many new rites might be super-added, as a piously fruitful imagination could conceive. Now, what a prolific source of *holy inventions* in sacred things would this one principle prove; more especially, when it got among bishops, synods, and councils?

Secondly, It is certain that *some* religious rites and customs were introduced in the Christian Church, without any Apostolical tradition *during the four first centuries*, the period of our author’s Catechisms. This he cannot consistently deny, upon his own avowed principles. Because he saith: (a) “ These *human* positive laws of this grand society, the Church, consist, partly of “ some

(z) An non putas omni fidei licere concipere, et constituere, duntaxat quod Deo congruat, quod disciplinæ conducatur, quod salutis proficiat &c. — salvo *traditionis* respectu. *Tertul. de Coron. Milit.*

(a) *L. Catech. 2. P. 31. Less.*

“ some rites and customs found to be the same
 “ in all parts of it, which may be called its com-
 “ mon law; and partly of the decrees of coun-
 “ cils, which may be fitly enough called its
 “ statute law.” — Well said, and wisely distin-
 guished. We have here, besides the statute law
 of the Church, her common law, respecting *some*
rites and customs found to be the same in all parts of
it: and yet, all the while, these are *human pos-*
sitive laws. So then there be some *universal* rites
 and customs in the Christian Church which are
 derived from human positive laws; consequently
 not from *Apostolical tradition*! And truly, the
 Christian Church, in the four first centuries, ei-
 ther exercised the legislative power, she speaks of
 or she did not. If she did not exercise it, how
 will it appear that she was invested with any such
 power at all? On the other hand, if she did ex-
 ercise this power; then, *some things* were intro-
 duced into the Christian Church in those early
 ages, without any *Apostolical tradition*, and only
 by *human positive laws*. — But, besides this *argu-*
ment to the man; I shall now produce some posi-
 tive evidence of the point in hand. St. Basil,
 speaking of Gregorie of Neocæsarea, expresseth
 himself thus; (b) “ He is still the admiration
 “ of all the people of that country. And the
 “ memory of him is ever fresh and lively in the
 “ Churches, not at all abated by length of time.
 “ For which reason they have not taken up any

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“ custom,

(b) — — οὐκοῦν οὐ πιρᾶξιν τινα, οὐ λόγον, οὐ τύπον τινα
 μουσικόν, παρ’ οὗ ἐκεῖνος κατέλιπε τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ προσέδῃκαν.
 Ταύτην τοι καὶ πόλλα τῶν παρ’ αὐτοῖς τελουμένων ἑλλενπῶς
 ἔχειν δοκεῖ διὰ τὸ καταστάσεως ἀρχαῖότροπον. οὐδὲν γὰρ
 ἠνέσχοντο οἱ κατὰ διαδοχὴν τὰς ἐκκλησίας οἰκονομήσαντες
 τῶν μετ’ ἐκείνον ἐρευνεθέντων παραδείξασθαι εἰς τροσθήκην.
Basil. de Sp. Sanct. cap. 29.

“ custom, word, or mystical rite, besides what
 “ they received from him. Insomuch that *this*
 “ Church appears *defective* in many things; be-
 “ cause they have nothing but what is antient.
 “ For, they, who have succeeded him in the
 “ government of the Churches, would admit
 “ none of those things, *that have been since in-*
 “ *vented*, but have kept intirely to the *first insti-*
 “ *tutions*, as derived from him.”—From which it
 appears, as a learned writer hath with his usual
 acumen observed, (c) “ that *Gregorie’s* Church
 “ at *Neocæsarea* were now an old fashioned people,
 “ Christians of the primitive sort.”—Again,
 St. *Augustin*, (in whose time, as another learn-
 ed man hath remarked, (d) the Church had
 gone beyond her rule, and beyond her power,
 in introducing or permitting to be introduced
very many significant ceremonies.) saith (e) “ Al-
 “ though it may not be understood how they
 “ are contrary to the faith; yet, because they
 “ load, and with servile burthens oppress religion,
 “ which *Christ* would have to be free, by a few
 “ and plain sacraments to be observed, there-
 “ fore they make the condition of the *Jews*
 “ more tolerable; who, if they knew not the
 “ time of liberty, were nevertheless subject to
 “ legal burthens only, not to human presump-
 “ tions.”

(c) Dr. Lardner’s *Credib. &c. Part 2. vol. 4. pag. 509, 510.*

(d) Dr. Taylor. *Duct. Dubit. pag. 668.*

(e) Etiam si non intelligatur quomodo contra fidem sunt, tamen quoniam onerant religionem, et servilibus oneribus premunt, quam *Christus* voluit paucissimis et manifestis celebrationum Sacramentis liberam esse; propterea faciunt, ut tolerabilior sit conditio Judæorum, qui etiam si tempus libertatis non agnoverunt, legalibus tamen sarcinis subiciebantur, non humanis præsumptionibus. *Augustin, Ep. 119. cap. 19.*

" tions." — In further proof of innovations, and of unapostolical customs, being introduced into the Christian Church within the given period, I might refer to *the Apostolical constitutions*, falsely so called, for numerous instances of this kind. Because by the best account that can be given of the said *Constitutions*, they contain certain ecclesiastical rules and decrees of council, after the times of the Apostles. (f)

Thirdly, It seems reasonable, to suppose that all the other religious customs of Christians, which have no real foundation in the scripture, were derived from the same fountain, that is, from human authority and invention. For, as no tolerable account can be given why the Apostles of Christ should commit part of the Christian institutes to writing, and not the whole; so, by the same rule, that any man, or number of men, took upon them to appoint *some* extra-scriptural rites and ceremonies, they might decree all the rest. And, it seems to be a reasonable presumption that they did so, since no probable evidence appears to the contrary. The supposition hath at least an higher degree of probability on it's side than the contrary hypothesis, viz. the unaccountable notion and opinion that the sacred penmen, who, confessedly writ under a divine inspiration, should deliver in writing an imperfect rule of religion, to the Christian Church. — If it be said, that, some religious customs are so antient, that we cannot trace their original: this argument may perhaps, cut both ways; but, I think it's sharper edge will turn against the traditionary scheme for the reason just now mentioned: Besides, there being no positive evidence that they were

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derived

(f) *Vid. Beveridge, Caw, Dupin, &c.*

derived from the Apostles, this circumstance itself is a strong presumption to the contrary. Because proper evidence of their divine authority is requisite in order to conciliate a due respect and regard to any divine institutions. Divine wisdom therefore would not have permitted such evidence to be wanting in the present case, if the things in question were to be received and revered under that notion. Their being very antient is no sufficient or satisfactory proof of their divine authority; for other things, as antient, if not more antient, can lay no claim to such an original; because the *mystery* of *iniquity* began to work (g) almost as early as the mystery of godliness. And, notwithstanding the pretended purity of the three first centuries, if that point were thoroughly examined, it would appear that the Christian Church preserved her virgin purity no longer than the Apostles lived; at least, if we may give credit to *Hegesippus*. (h) Another antient writer *Papias* by name, speaks of some persons, in his time; (i) “ who inculcated other precepts than those that were delivered by the Lord, and proceeded from the truth itself.” — To mention the innovations and corruptions in religion, of the fourth century, is wholly superfluous; when it is so very notorious that (k) even “ before the reign of Con-

stantine,

(g) 2 *Thess.* ii. 7.

(h) — ἐπιλέγει ὡς ἄρα μέχρι τῶν τότε χρόνων παρθένος καθαρά καὶ ἀδιαφόρος ἔμενεν ἡ Εκκλησία — ὡς δ' ὁ ἱερός τῶν Αποστόλων χορὸς διάφορον εἰλήφει τοῦ βίου τέλος, Ἔς. *Euseb. Hist. Eccles. lib. 3. cap. 32.*

(i) — τοῖς τὰς ἀλλοτρίας ἐντολὰς μνημονεύουσιν, ἀλλὰ τοῖς τὰς παρὰ τοῦ κυρίου τῇ πίσει δεδομένας, καὶ εἰπ' αὐτῆς παρ' ἀγινόμενας τῆς ἀληθείας. *Euseb. ibid. cap. 39.*

(k) Περὶ γὰρ μικρὸν ἔμπροσθεν τῶν Κωνσταντίνου χρόνων
τᾶ

“ *stantine*, [and much more after it] there sprang
 “ up a kind of heathenish Christianity, which
 “ mingled itself with the true Christian religi-
 “ on.” — *The Catechist* himself acknowledges,
 that, in the reign of the emperor *Constantine*, who
 embraced the Christian religion; “ the virtue
 “ of the generallity of Christians began to de-
 “ cline,” (l) And, as virtue declines, under a
 profession of religion, superstition is apt to grow
 in its room, to supply the want of it, especially
 when the minds of men are already disposed
 that way; which was the case of a great many
 persons, at that time, when the world came into
 the Church. — But then, on the other hand, if
 we cannot trace the original of some religious
 rites and customs; it may be urged, that we have
 no certain account of their being introduced by
 human authority. To which I answer; the *silence*
 of history in this case may be accounted for, from
 the defect of history. That ecclesiastical history
 for the first ages of the Christian Church is very
 defective, every one knows, that hath any ac-
 quaintance at all with such matters; and it should
 be no difficult thing to convince the *Catechist* of
 this mortifying truth, upon his own principles.
 Because the thirty-seventh canon of the *Apos-
 tles* ordains “ that the bishops should hold coun-
 “ cils twice every year.” — Upon which *Bishop*
Beverege (m) hath this remark; “ That councils
 “ were frequently held, in the primitive Church,
 “ according to this canon, is evident, from
 “ *Tertullian*,” refering to a passage in this an-
 cient

τῶ ἀληθεῖ χριστιανισμῷ ἐλλυσιζαν χριστιανισμῶς. *Socrat. Hist.*
Ec. lib. 1. cap. 22.

(l) *Sh. Catech. 1. P. 29. Less.*

(m) *Annot. in Can. Apost. 37.*

tient father, (n) where he speaks even in his
 time, " Of councils being convened in certain
 " places, from all the Churches, to debate mat-
 " ters of great moment ; and this representation
 " saith he, of the whole Christian name is ce-
 " lebrated with great solemnity." — Now, with-
 out complimenting the said canons with that
 high antiquity and authority, which you O *Catechist*,
 and such as you, would confer upon them:
 let us only suppose, with the same learned Prelate,
 (o) " That these canons, though not made by
 " the Apostles, are yet very antient, as being
 " a collection of the canons of diverse Councils,
 " which were held before that of *Nice*;" and
 according to this supposition, what a multitude of
 Councils and Synods, must have been held, pur-
 suant to the aforesaid canon ; of whose acts and
 decrees we have no particular account extant ? (p)
 Besides the holy Scriptures, other acts and mo-
 numents of the Christian Church, might perish
 in the flames under the *Diocletian* persecution.
 To which let me add, without offence, that a pious
 desire and endeavour to procure the greater ve-
 neration for unwritten customs might prompt
 some persons, to conceal their true origin, and
 to suppress those synodical acts, whereby they
 were first introduced into the Christian Church.
 The compiler of the *Apostolical constitutions* mani-
 festly appears to have proceeded upon this plan.
 But

(n) Aguntur præcepta per Græcias illas certis in locis con-
 cilia ex universis Ecclesiis, per quæ et altiora quæque in com-
 mune tractantur, et ipsa representatio totius nominis Chris-
 tiani magna veneratione celebratur. *Tertul. de Jej. p. 779.*

(o) *Codex. Can. Eccles. Illustr. Sc. cap. 2. sect. i.*

(p) See *Baxter's Hist. of Councils abridged, chap. 2.*
where mention is made only of 29. before the Council of
Nice.

But yet, I am wonderfully pleased to see, what a strict regard to the Scripture, as their rule in religion, those very men had, who first invented these new improvements in Christianity; because they seem to have deduced these things from it, in their way and method of interpretation. And therefore I must applaud their piety, though I cannot admire their judgment. Their weak constructions and fanciful applications of Scripture, (q) may move one's pity; but their firm adherence to it, as the rule of faith and practice, meriteth the highest praise.

Conclusion.

Upon the whole then, I conclude, from the general consent of the Christian fathers, that they made the *Scripture* their rule in religion. — But, in their interpretations of Scripture, they too much indulged a pious fancy; from whence it came to pass, that many things were by them extracted from the Scripture, which had no real foundation in it. — Such things, therefore, could not possibly be *Apostolical traditions*; nor, consequently, are Christians under any obligation to receive them under that notion. — On the contrary, it is our indispensable duty to *protest* against every thing of this nature; that so we may not father the weak fancies and fond devices of fallible, though pious men, upon the unerring spirit of

(q) Notum est cuilibet, quam nimium mystice, et superstitiose (pene etiam inepte) primi illi Christiani Scripturas sacras sint interpretati. *I. Voss. Judic. de Barnab. Ep.* “Violently pressing many passages in Scripture to serve the cause, straining the string many times till it cracked again.” *Cave's Prim. Christian. P. 2. chap. 5.*

of God, to the great scandal and reproach of our holy religion. In itself the best religion in the world, but in danger, I fear, to become the worst, in the hands of some men: who, retaining all the superstitious follies and vain sopperies of former ages, without (perhaps) half their virtues, and possessed with the true spirit of *Pharisaism*, are for turning plain, pure, and most primitive Christianity, into pompous form and ceremony, till at last they make the commands of God of none effect by their *traditions*. For what else do they, that by their whimsical opinions destroy the great law of charity, and teach, or at least tempt poor deluded souls, to value themselves as Christians, and to despise others as no Christians, merely upon the point of an indifferent ceremony? Witness that false, foolish, and scandalous position of the *Catechist*; (r) “keeping Lent, or an Antepascal fast is an universal, Apostolical tradition”; and no Church ought to be owned that abrogates it.”—But who art thou, O man, that judgest another, in relation to such matters? After *St. Paul* hath said; (s) “Let, no man, therefore, judge you, in meat or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days.” Good God! what notion must that man have of religion, who can place the substance and very essence of Christianity in the most indifferent circumstances? Or, what opinion must he have conceived of the divine wisdom and goodness, in leaving any point, which is essential to the Christian religion, undetermined in the *holy Scriptures* designed to *make us wise to salvation*? If the nature and reason of the thing cannot convince;

(r) *L. Catech.* 2. P. 32. *Leff.*

(s) *Coloss.* ii. 16.

vince; let him learn this great truth from a most venerable father, that, (t) “ The scriptures are “ perfect, as being dictated by the word of “ God and his Spirit.” Therefore, to borrow a distick from a modern author; (u) “ Charge imperfection on the written word, “ and you arraign the spirit of the Lord.” It is the doctrine of the Church of England that the (w) “ Holy Scripture containeth all things necessary to salvation: So that what is not “ read therein, nor may be proved thereby, “ is not to be required of any man.” Here then let us stick, here let us all abide with unshaken confidence, with a firm and rational assurance, that the infinitely wise and good God would never exhibit to the world a written inspired rule of religion, incapable of answering the proper end of a rule, without being beholden, after all, to the uncertainties and contradictions of oral unwritten tradition. — But so it is! as the Apostle hath forewarned us, (and with his words I will conclude) (x) “ Evil men and seducers will wax “ worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived. But continue thou in the things, which “ thou hast learned, and hast been assured of, “ knowing of whom thou hast learned them; “ And that from a child thou hast known the “ holy Scriptures, which are able to make thee “ wise unto salvation, through faith, which “ is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by
U “ Inspi-

(t) Rectissime scientes, quia Scripturæ quidem perfectæ sunt, quippe a verbo Dei et spiritu ejus Dictæ. *Iren. advers. Heres. lib. 2. cap. 47. p. 173.*

(u) Nam qui scripturas defectus arguit, ille Auctorem accusat, judicat ille deum. *Nicols. de Literis Invent. lib. 4.*

(w) *Sixth Article.*

(x) *2 Tim. iii. 14, — 18. iv. 1, — 4.*

“ Inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. I charge thee, therefore, before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing, and his kingdom: preach the word, &c. For, the time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine; but, after their own lusts, shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears. And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto *fables*.”

P O S T C R I P T.

I have omitted one hint, which might help to confirm the notion I advance, of *unwritten traditions* being grounded upon *Scripture*; viz. “ that the pretended oral traditions of the Jews appear to be originally derived from the constructions, which the Jewish fathers put upon certain passages of Scripture. e. g. *Audiui a majoribus traditum, quod, in ista digressione maris, singulis quibusque tribubus filiorum Israel singula aquæ divisiones factæ sint, & propria unicuique tribui in mari aperta sit via. Idque ostendi ex eo quod in Psalmis Scriptum est, Qui divisit mare rubrum in divisiones &c. Origen. in Gen. Hom. 5. p. 81. Vol. 1.*

F I N I S.



ERRATA.

PAGE 4. line last in the note (a) after *catechism*, put a comma. p. 5. l. 1. r. *church*. p. 9. l. 3. in the notes, after *-borch* put a comma. p. 11. l. 4. r. *thereafter*. p. 14. l. 4. in the notes, for *fulsæ* r. *falsæ*. p. 18. l. 2. from the bottom, in the notes after *Coteler*, put a period. p. 20. l. 6. in the notes ἐπιπολαζόνσας r. ἐπιπολαζούσας. p. 22. l. 1. in the notes, r. Προσφυγών. *ibid* l. 4. after *Coteler* put a period. p. 24. l. 22. for Lord, read LORD. *ibid* l. 1. in the notes r. χρεῖσθ. *ibid* l. 4. in the notes, r. ματαιότητα. p. 26. l. 1. in the notes for συν r. σοῦ. p. 27. l. 3. for *Næres*, r. *Hæres*. p. 28. l. 9. r. *blame*. *ibid* l. 2. in the notes, r. *scripturarum*. p. 30. l. 32. r. *Catechumens*. p. 32. last l. for *Næres*. r. *Hæres*. *ibid* l. 3. in the notes for *Næratiki* r. *Hæretici*. p. 37. l. 3. after *place* for at r. in. *ibid* l. 25. for *Valetius* r. *Valesius*. p. 41. last l. r. *Heretics*. p. 43. l. 1. r. *knowledge*. p. 45. l. 6. after *one* put a comma. *ibid* l. 30. for *imposture* r. *impostor*. p. 46. l. 6. for *unconsonable* r. *unconscionable*. p. 50. l. 17. r. *sickle*. *ibid* last l. in the notes, r. 490. p. 51. l. 8. after *alone*, dele comma. p. 56. l. 10. in the notes, r. *circumcisum*. *ibid* l. 23. after *testimonium*, add *falsum*. p. 59. l. 10. in the notes r. in *Johan.* p. 64. l. 11. in the notes for *nuetur* r. *netur*. p. 65. l. 6. after *fall* put a period. *ibid* l. 6. and p. 114. l. 22. r. *Lerins*, p. 67. l. 3. in the notes, after *cui* r. *scis*. p. 68. l. 2. in the notes r. θεσπισματα. p. 69. l. 13. r. *metropolitan*. p. 71. l. 2. r. *positive*. p. 77. l. 1. in the notes, παραδεχθή-. p. 81. l. 1. in the notes, r. δσάφεια. *ibid* l. 4. in the notes, r. νοῦδατ. p. 84. l. 2. in the notes, r. πισίως. p. 89. l. 2. from the bottom, in the notes, after *Hist*, put a period. p. 97. l. 26. r. *urge*. p. 99. l. 3. in the notes. r. 629. p. 105. l. 27. r. *ticklish*. p. 111. l. 7. in the notes r. *Scripturis*. p. 119. l. 27. after *to* dele *the*. p. 123. l. 3. r. *superstitiously*. p. 124. l. 6. r. *men*. p. 125. l. 2. in the notes, after 50 put a period. and l. 3. after 9. put a period. p. 134. l. 1. in the notes, Κυριακή. p. 139. l. 22. r. *beer*. p. 140. l. 26. r. *specific*. p. 145. l. 1. in the notes, πρᾶξιν τινα. ADDENDA. p. 113. l. 8. r. *colleagues*. p. 114. l. 1. after *been*, add *always*. p. 117. l. 8. r. *side*. p. 117. l. 13. after *without* r. *laying* any [great stress &c.] Besides other literal mistakes, which the candid reader will excuse e. g. p. 149. l. 1. in the notes, ἐλληνίζων, for ἐλληνίζων. &c.

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called) *Catholic Epistles*, viz

St. JAMES,

I St. PETER,

II St. PETER,

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St. JUDE,

I, II, and III.

Of St. JOHN.

Attempted in Imitation of Mr. *Locke's* Manner.

To which are annexed, several critical Dissertations.

IV. A Collection of Tracts. 1. A Dissertation on 2 *Theff.*
ii. 1, — 12. 2. A letter to a friend, concerning the end and
design of prayer. 3. A postscript to the letter on prayer, con-
cerning the views which we ought to have in praying; the
drawing up proper forms; the use of scripture language; the
confession of such sins only, as we are conscious we have been
guilty of. 4. The 30th Dissertation of *Maximus Tyrius*, con-
cerning this Question, "Whether we ought to pray to God,
"or no?" Translated from the *Greek*. 5. Remarks on
the foregoing dissertation of *Maximus Tyrius*. 6. The doc-
trine of predestination reviewed. 7. A brief Account of *Cal-*
vin's causing *Servetus* to be burned for an *Heretic*. The
Third Edition.

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Defence of the brief account of *Calvin's* treatment of *Serve-*
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ment of Dr. *Leighton*. 10. An essay, concerning the belief
of things, which are above reason. And, a general preface.

V. A Volume of Sermons on the following subjects, viz.
The Resurrection of *Lazarus*. The unchangeable Difference
between Good and Evil. The absolute Necessity of Holiness,
in order to final and perfect Happiness. The Case of the Pro-
phet, who was deluded by a false Prophet, and slain by a
Lion. The spiritual (not the natural or animal) Man, dispo-
sed to receive the Gospel. The absurd Nature, and terrible
Consequences, of Transubstantiation. The Gospel, a revealed
Mystery. Christ came not to call the Righteous, but Sinners,
to Repentance. The Immensity and Omniscience of God, a
constant Motive to Piety and Virtue, &c.

These three by George Benson, D. D.



